

2026

COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY APPLICATION HANDBOOK

PGDIPPRACPSYCH(COMM)



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato



Welcome ...

...to the Intern Handbook for those applying for the Postgraduate Diploma in the Practice of Psychology (Community) (PSYCH543 The Practice of Community Psychology; PSYC541 Case Study Analysis in Applied Community Psychology; & PSYC542 Professional Issues in Psychology).

This handbook is intended as a key resource document for application and we hope that the extensive information contained within it will provide solutions, understanding and guidance for you.

This handbook provides detailed information about:

- Application for Entry
- Core competencies
- Supervision
- Course summaries

Questions specific to the PGDipPracPsych(Comm) should be directed to one of the Community Psychology Programme Administrator in the first instance.

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Contents

Welcome ...	1
Contents	2
Overview: PGDipPracPsych(Comm).....	4
Requirements	4
Enrolment.....	5
Workload	5
Entry into the PGDipPracPsych(Comm).....	6
Essential Information	6
Entry requirements	6
Applying for entry	7
Your status as a registered intern psychologist	10
Criteria for Entry.....	10
Suitable Employment.....	12
Internship information.....	14
Expectations of the intern.....	14
Workplace expectations.....	14
University expectations	15
Oversight and support of interns.....	15
Placement Supervision	15
Workplace Supervisor (normally Line Manager)	16
External Supervisor	17
University Supervision.....	17
Benefits to the organisation	18
The internship agreement.....	18
Appendix 1: Community Psychology Core Competencies	19
Foundational Competencies	20
Principles and values of community psychology.....	20
Cultural Safety	20
Ethics and the Law	21
Te Tiriti o Waitangi and bi-culturalism.....	21
Relationship skills.....	21
Reflective practice	22
Critical, multi-level analysis	22

Practitioner Competencies.....	22
Communication skills	22
Research skills.....	22
Community and organisational processes and interventions	23
Specialist Competencies	23
Appendix 2: Template for Letter of Support.....	24
Appendix 3: Template for Internship Agreement.....	25
Acknowledgements	27

Overview: PGDipPracPsych(Comm)

This qualification is completed over one year (full-time) or two years (part-time) while you are undertaking intensive supervised professional practice as an intern psychologist. With a focus on obtaining and demonstrating a minimum level of competency in all of the core competencies for community psychology, the PGDipPracPsych(Comm) provides you with the opportunity to effectively apply in practice knowledge and skills relevant to the practice of community psychology. Graduates will have the skills to adapt to a variety of community settings and work at various levels from the flax-roots to policy making. The PGDipPracPsych(Comm) has been accredited by the New Zealand Psychologists Board as a programme leading to registration as a psychologist under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act, 2003¹.

The goals of the PGDipPracPsych(Comm) are to provide those who have completed Masters or Doctorate degrees in community psychology with:

1. A quality learning experience for transitioning from academic knowledge to professional practice;
2. A mechanism for enhancing continuing professional development in the practice of community psychology; and
3. A pathway for registration as a psychologist under the Health Practitioners Competency Assurance Act.

Requirements

To complete the PGDipPracPsych(Comm) you must gain 120 points at 500 level in the following papers: PSYC541 Case Study Analysis in Community Psychology (40 points); PSYC542 Professional Issues in Community Psychology (20 points); PSYCH543 The Practice of Community Psychology (60 points).

These papers comprise a package: you must enrol in all three concurrently, either full or part-time. The key requirements are:

1. Complete an induction.
2. Complete at least 1500 hours of (approved, supervised) professional practice and maintain a log of your professional activity.
3. Maintain a journal reflecting on your practice and professional development.
4. Participate in university and workplace supervision.
5. Complete 5 case studies.
6. Participate in a mid-internship review.
7. Compile a folio of your work, including reflections on your internship and a self- assessment of your competence.
8. In collaboration with your university supervisor, arrange for the collation of feedback on your practice from supervisors and other stakeholders.
9. Complete a final examination.

¹ The programme was last accredited in June 2023 for a period of 7 years. It should be noted while the University will endeavour to meet the general terms and requirements of the New Zealand Psychologists Board in good faith, the final decision for the registration of each applicant is at the discretion of the Psychologists Board.

Although you will receive formative feedback throughout the internship, the award of the diploma rests entirely with the panel which conducts the final oral examination. It is the panel's responsibility to assess you against the Community Psychology Core Competencies.

In making its assessment, the panel will consider both your performance in the examination and the documents which are submitted to it. No grades are awarded: the papers will be assessed solely on pass/fail basis.

Enrolment

There are two enrolment options for the PGDipPracPsych(Comm). You can enrol fulltime, which runs for 12 months, or part-time, which runs for 24 months. It is recommended that you enrol fulltime although it is recognised that part-time may suit some students better.

Please be aware - if additional work is required after you have completed your exam, you will need to re-enrol for a period stipulated by the Director. You will need to wait for the next scheduled examination period (usually February) to re-sit your oral examination.

Workload

To complete the PGDipPracPsych(Comm) you must complete a minimum of 1500 hours of professional practice. This is the equivalent of 40 weeks if you are working full-time (37.5 hours per week).

Entry into the PGDipPracPsych(Comm)

Essential Information

Internships and supervision arrangements must be approved in principle by the Programme Director prior to enrolling and registering as an intern psychologist.

An acceptable internship is full- or part-time work that fits the NZ Psychologist Board's definition of psychology. As places are limited, selection is a competitive process. Successful interns will be offered a place into the programme with the intention that their internship will start in A Trimester. Those who are offered a place, will have a time limit to accept or risk their place being offered to someone else.

We recommend that you read copies of the present course outlines available on the University website and communicate with one of the programme staff to discuss the suitability of the course for you. For all the papers listed below, interns are expected to enrol in the papers concurrently (at the same time).

[PSYC541 Case Study Analysis in Community Psychology](#)

[PSYC542 Professional Issues in Community Psychology](#)

[PSYCH543 The Practice of Community Psychology](#)

If you have any queries regarding the programme, supervision, or internship, please contact the Programme Administrator – community.psychology@waikato.ac.nz

Entry requirements

In addition to fulfilling the requirements set out in the appropriate University of Waikato regulations, students must meet the School of Psychological and Social Sciences requirements for entry into the programme.

The School of Psychological and Social Sciences requirements are:

- **Completed core graduate-level courses in Community Psychology** at the University of Waikato or similar coursework elsewhere (as approved by the School of Psychological and Social Sciences).
- **A Masters or Doctoral degree specialising in Community Psychology**
Where a candidate has not completed a named degree in Community Psychology, the School of Psychological and Social Sciences will assess whether sufficient graduate-level papers and a thesis in the specialisation have been taken to allow entry. Students may be required to take extra course work prior to or concurrently with the programme. A completed thesis must be at least 90 points (NZ).
- **Ongoing, full-time or part-time employment** (either paid or unpaid) in NZ which provides the opportunity to practice Community Psychology within an organisation that allows this work to be used as an internship. Whether the employment requirement is met will be determined by the School of Psychological and Social Sciences from the job description. A signed letter of support from the candidate's organisation/manager is also required.

- **The availability of field supervision for PSYCH543**

Field supervision should be from a Registered Psychologist.

- **The availability of a place in the programme**

This is determined by the class size at the time of application and by the availability of University-based supervision.

- **Successful registration as an intern psychologist with the New Zealand Psychology Board**

Entry is subject to the approval of the Programme Director and the Head of the School of Psychological and Social Sciences.

Applying for entry

Before applying formally for entry into this programme candidates should contact the School of Psychological and Social Sciences to discuss their plans –

community.psychology@waikato.ac.nz - including the suitability of the employment and the availability of appropriate supervision.

Applications will require the following documentation:

Application for qualification in MyWaikato

If you are a returning student, please apply via MyWaikato for the PGDipPracPsych(Comm).

If you are new to the University, please create a student account and submit the University application for the PGDipPracPsych(Comm) via MyWaikato.

Once your university entry criteria has been assessed and it is determined that you meet entry, you will be invited to apply via the internal school selection form.

1. **Internal School Selection form**

Please complete the selection form and include your most current personal details and details of the proposed internship.

2. **Academic Qualifications**

You will be asked to upload an official transcript of your current academic record to the selection form.

3. **A Statement of Purpose**

You will be asked to provide a Statement of Purpose.

This is an outline of your reasons for considering Community Psychology as a career, as well as a brief overview of your major interests within community psychology and what you might hope to accomplish in your training. Please also include a specific statement about cultural competence/training/experience.

4. **Thesis Abstract (and thesis if applicable)**

You'll be asked to upload a copy of your thesis abstract to the selection form.

You will also be asked to upload your completed thesis (Masters/PhD), if you have submitted/completed it.

5. Your Curriculum Vitae

Please upload a copy of your most recent Curriculum Vitae.

Your most recent CV should include details of your educational experiences, degrees obtained, honours and accomplishments, work experiences (positions held, voluntary activities), and other professional kinds of activities. Please do not include general letters of recommendation from past employers. Your CV should be a maximum of 5 pages.

6. Personal Situation

This is an opportunity to indicate whether you require any additional support within the programme.

7. Criminal Convictions

Please be aware that the results of any police vetting checks and suitability checks will be considered alongside information provided in this form.

Please note: Failure to declare any convictions may result in exclusion from the Programme. All successful applicants will be required to undergo periodic police vetting by the New Zealand Police Vetting Service, as part of a Children's Worker Safety Check under the Vulnerable Children Act 2014.

8. Student Disciplinary action

If you have been involved in student disciplinary action at university, you will be asked to disclose details on this also.

9. Three Letters of recommendation from Referees

As part of your application to the PGDipPracPsych(Comm), you'll be asked to provide the contact details of three referees;

- 1x line manager/supervisor (work related)
- 1x academic supervisor (study related) - If your thesis was completed more than 5 years ago then a line manager or someone who has had a supervisory role can be negotiated as a referee in the workplace. You should contact the Programme Director to discuss how this requirement might be addressed.
- 1x character (community related)

You will supply referee contact details within the PGDipPracPsych selection form.

The Reference form link will be sent out by the programme administrator, directly to your nominated referee, after the selection form closes on 15 September.

Avoid family, friends, relatives, or people who know you only socially rather than in terms of your academic or professional work.

Remember that referees always have the best intentions but may need to be reminded to complete the form within the appropriate time-frame – the programme will not do this for you.

Applications with FEWER THAN THREE references will not be considered by the selection panel, so please try to ensure that your referee has completed the reference form by 1 October.

10. An Agency Letter of Support

Please arrange for your prospective internship organisation to complete a Letter of Support (Found in Appendix 2 in this document) to confirm the employment is appropriate for the programme and details of field supervision. This letter outlines expectations of both the student and organisation, including permission for students to attend regular classes through to supervision requirements.

11. Job description

Please upload your Job Description for the role you will be working in during your internship.

12. An onsite supervisor's Curriculum Vitae

Please upload your external supervisor's CV to the application.

If you have a second supervisor, please upload their CV to the application.

The Procedure We Follow

1. All MyWaikato applications are screened by the Programme administrator in the first instance to ensure university entry has been met.
2. The internal school selection form will then be screened by the Programme administrator to ensure all documentation is included before passing on to the selection committee.
3. The selection committee will consider the selection documentation. The selection committee includes programme staff and practicing psychologists.
4. You may be asked to attend an interview – you will be given sufficient warning should the selection panel wish to meet with you.
5. If we are not able to consider your application further, we will notify you of this as soon as possible.
6. If your application is successful, a letter of offer from the programme will be sent to you once selections have been considered. Some offers may be made contingent on the student/you agreeing to complete further coursework within the internship year. You will be given time to consider the offer and will need to accept by the deadline provided. We would ask that you provide us with written acceptance or decline by email.
7. Once you have accepted the letter of offer, a University conditional offer will be issued via MyWaikato. You must at this stage apply for [registration as an intern](#) with the New Zealand Psychologist Board.

Note that your internship will not begin until your registration as an intern psychologist is confirmed by the New Zealand Psychologists Board. The Board process can take up to 3 months, so you are advised to submit your registration application as soon as practicable. You must not count any supervision hours until your University course starts. For details on registering as an 'Intern Psychologist' see <http://www.psychologistsboard.org.nz/>

8. You will be sent police vetting documentation by the programme, please complete and return this as soon as possible as this can take time to process.
9. You have until February 1st to submit any other additional documentation required, to the Programme administrator eg. Intern registration confirmation from the NZPB, internship agreements, job descriptions etc. Once the Programme administrator has received all required documentation, you will receive an unconditional offer and may enrol in your papers.
10. All unsuccessful applicants will be notified via email as soon as possible.

Please contact the Programme administrator community.psychology@waikato.ac.nz - if you have any questions.

The panel's decision is final and no correspondence can be entered into.

Your status as a registered intern psychologist

Registration is a vital accountability mechanism for all psychologists, including interns. That is why you cannot begin your internship until you are registered. But for accountability to work, not only must psychologists be registered: the people we work with (clients, commissioners, research participants and other stakeholders) must know that we are psychologists.

This is usually straightforward if our job title includes the word psychologist. But some intern community psychologists may carry other job titles such as researcher, evaluator, manager, or coordinator. If this applies to you, it is important that you are transparent about your status as an intern psychologist. For example, you should mention this when you form a new professional relationship (e.g. introducing yourself to a research participant).

Criteria for Entry

The criteria used in approving students for entry into the PGDipPracPsych(Comm) are described below.

1. Availability of suitable employment

Successful applicants must be in suitable full-time employment (either paid or unpaid) in an organisation that provides the opportunity to practice significantly in community psychology. If you don't have a suitable internship when you apply or your proposed

internship has not been formally approved, any acceptance into the programme will be conditional upon approval of the specific internship, including an internship agreement. If there is a change to the intern role, a new job description must be submitted to the Programme Director for approval.

The New Zealand Psychologists Board requires that an internship comprises in-person contact that is a structured, supervised and evaluated professional practice programme of at least 1500 hours. (This is the equivalent of 40 weeks full time (37.5 hours per week.) The 1500 hours may be comprised of short term contracts. Each role must be vetted and approved by the Programme Director. All conditions at initial time of application apply. At least half-time employment is required for part-time enrolment in the PGDipPracPsych(Comm).

Further details regarding what constitutes 'suitable' employment are provided below and you are strongly advised to have discussed your employment situation with the Programme Director, prior to submitting your application.

2. Availability of suitable supervision

Supervision is integral to the PGDipPracPsych(Comm). Given this, you will be unable to enroll in the PGDipPracPsych(Comm) programme unless appropriate supervision is available (both workplace and university).

3. Academic ability

For your application to be successful, you will have above average academic ability as demonstrated by grades for university and other tertiary or professional papers completed, especially papers in psychology and related social science subjects (e.g., Indigenous studies, anthropology, education, politics, sociology). Consideration will be given to examples of work which are submitted with the application. Applications are required to be supported by one reference relevant to academic experiences. For those who completed their thesis less than 5 years prior to application, you will be required to provide contact details for your thesis supervisor(s). The supervisor will be contacted by a Programme representative (normally the Programme Director) to provide a reference regarding your academic ability, workload management, and ability to engage effectively in a supervisory relationship. Applications without the contact details for a thesis supervisor, or approved alternative for those more than 5 years since completion, will not be accepted. If you have not completed a named degree in community psychology, the Head of the School of Psychological and Social Sciences, in conjunction with the Programme Director and Community Psychology Selections Committee will assess whether you have equivalent graduate-level papers and a relevant thesis or dissertation.

4. Community-related experience and/or interests

Successful applicants will have experience in community settings and/or they will be able to elaborate (in their application and/or in an interview) interests relevant to community psychology. Experience as a worker, whether paid or voluntary, may be relevant. So too may experience as a member, participant or client of an agency. Applications are required to be supported by one reference relevant to community experiences.

5. Personal qualities

Successful applicants will have: good inter-personal skills; show an ability to establish effective relationships with a wide variety of people; have demonstrated a commitment to collaborative working relationships; show an understanding of issues of diversity (e.g. ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, etc.); be able to manage a heavy workload; and able to engage successfully in a supervisory relationship. Applications are required to be supported by one community related character reference.

Suitable Employment

Enrolment in the PGDipPracPsych(Comm) requires that you be in on-going employment (paid or unpaid) in an organisation which provides you with the opportunity to practise significantly in community psychology for a minimum of 1500 hours. Your internship should involve a range of activities which provide you with the opportunity to develop and demonstrate the core competencies expected of a community psychology intern. It is against those competencies that you will be examined at the end of the internship.

The extent to which your role provides you with the opportunity to develop and demonstrate these core competencies is the basis on which the suitability of your employment setting for an internship will be assessed. Sections in the selection form where you are asked to provide statements regarding the suitability of your position for the PGDipPracPsych(Comm) and your own interest in this programme of study should be referenced to the core competencies.

Employment which provides you with the opportunity to practise significantly in community psychology is varied. Community psychologists work in a wide range of roles and settings and seldom work in positions which carry the title Community Psychologist. More often you will find them in positions that carry titles such as Researcher, Analyst, Health Promoter, Coordinator, Manager and Advisor. You will find them working in fields as diverse as education, health, human services, environmental management, criminal justice and development. They may be employed in central, regional or local government or by district health boards, iwi organisations, private businesses (e.g. research and consultancy organisations), community groups and other non-government organisations. Some are self-employed.

Thus, community psychology practice is distinguished not by job title, field or organisational context. Rather, it is distinguished by:

1. The general approach to the work.

A community psychological way of working is one which values such things as collaboration, empowerment of disenfranchised groups, inclusiveness and social justice. It is an approach informed by an ecological analysis and a systems perspective. It pays attention to cultural context.

2. The level at which you work.

By and large, community psychologists are more likely to be working at the level of groups, organisations, communities and society than at the level of the individual – although in practice, many community psychologists will be involved in some individual level work, if for no other reason than those larger groupings are comprised of individuals who may have unique as well as common needs and aspirations.

3. The level of responsibility.

The professional practice of community psychology implies the exercise of professional judgment. While you will work under supervision, it is unlikely that you will be able to demonstrate the competencies expected of a community psychology intern if your approach to the work is highly prescribed. In your internship, you need to be working in roles in which you have some autonomy and scope to develop a community psychological approach to your work.

4. Making a difference.

Community psychology is about social change. Your internship needs to provide opportunities for you to contribute to positive change at the group, community, organisational and/or national level. Such change may be an explicit part of some internship positions (e.g. planner, policy analyst, community development worker) but this is not a requirement for a position to be approved for internship credit. However, whatever your job description, you are expected to be actively working for relevant change in the setting or settings in which you live and work.

Internship positions are usually full-time, paid positions but it is the nature of the activities which determines suitability for internship credit, not whether it is full-time or part time, paid or voluntary. Indeed, you are encouraged to consider

relevant activities outside your paid work for inclusion in your internship. That is, there will undoubtedly be opportunities in your general life to apply community psychology values and skills.

These might include such things as participation in a marae committee, a school board of trustees, a kapa haka group, a self-help group, an advocacy organisation, a neighbourhood action group or a political organisation. Even if you are participating in such organisations as a citizen (rather than as a psychologist per se), you will nevertheless likely have opportunities to develop your community psychology skills and to reflect on relevant community processes and issues.

In negotiating to use a position for the PGDipPracPsych(Comm), it is likely that you will need to 'sell' the idea to your employer/organisation. There are advantages for organisations who host interns. These include an employee who is well resourced in terms of supervision and support. The intern/employee has access to the university library resources which may be of benefit to the organisation. They get an employee who takes their professional development seriously. In addition, there may be opportunities for collaboration with the community psychology programme which can benefit the organisation.

Make sure you have planned a strategy prior to approaching an organisation about your participation in the PGDipPracPsych(Comm). You are strongly advised to discuss your internship intentions as early as possible with, in the first instance, the Programme Director.

Internship information

Information about the internship required for students completing the Postgraduate Diploma in the Practice of Psychology (Community)- PGDipPracPsych(Comm)

Most organisations and workplace supervisors have specific questions about what the internship involves. We are happy for you to contact us for further information.

The PGDipPracPsych(Comm) is a one-year qualification completed while undertaking intensive supervised professional practice as an intern psychologist. To complete the programme, interns must:

- Attend an induction
- Participate in regular supervision meetings
- Complete a weekly practice log
- Complete five case studies
- Complete a project/casework folio
- Pass a final oral examination in which the student is assessed in relation to the core competencies of the PGDipPracPsych(Comm). A pass recommendation is needed for the intern to be awarded the qualification.

Expectations of the intern

We regard the internship as a partnership between the Community Psychology Programme and the employing organisation. We are committed to working with employers to clarify our respective roles and responsibilities so that the intern can meet both the requirements of the position and the requirements of the University.

The New Zealand Psychologists Board Guidelines recommend experienced practitioners have two hours of supervision per month (or one hour if working part-time). Naturally, as a beginner practitioner, you will need more supervision.

You are expected to have:

- Four hours of university supervision per month and
- Two hours of workplace supervision per month

This assumes that you are working full-time. Less frequent supervision may be appropriate if you are working part-time. Generally, supervision meetings will be held face-to face but exceptions can be made for guest lecturers joining from distant locations. On occasion under unexpected circumstances, interns can request to attend via video conference.

Workplace expectations

To enrol, interns must be in ongoing employment (paid or unpaid) in an organisation which provides them with the opportunity to practise significantly in community psychology for a minimum of 1500 hours. The internship should involve a range of activities which provide the opportunity to develop and demonstrate the core competencies expected of a community

psychology intern². The intern will also be expected to meet the normal requirements of their employment contract.

University expectations

Interns are required to receive regular university and placement supervision, and meet the course requirements stated above.

Oversight and support of interns

Supervision is integral. Interns have both a university supervisor, and a workplace supervisor. In general, the university supervisor with whom interns will have their primary supervisory relationship, focuses on professional development and on monitoring the intern's preparation for the final oral examination. The intern's placement supervision will generally be oriented towards the performance of work tasks within the organisation.

Placement Supervision

Undertaking the PGDipPracPsych(Comm) to gain registration as a psychologist in New Zealand through the New Zealand Psychologists Board under the Health Professional Competency Act (HPCA) requires that interns' placement supervision arrangements include a psychologist who is registered under that Act. However, given the diversity of settings in which internships occur, the reality is that it can often be difficult to have a registered psychologist as a workplace supervisor. Given this, there are a variety of ways that placement supervision can be configured to meet the requirements of the New Zealand Psychologists Board.

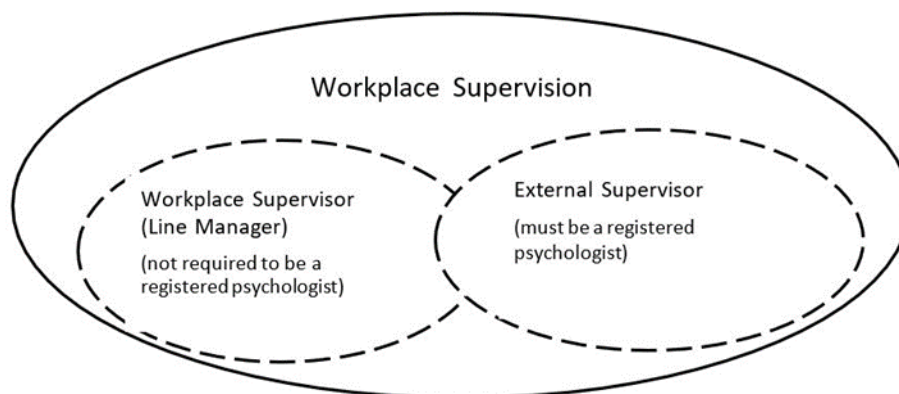
Interns will almost certainly have a line manager or someone in the organisation to whom they report. Normally, the person who manages, supervises or monitors the intern within the employment setting will become their workplace supervisor for internship purposes.

However, if that person is not a registered psychologist, the placement supervision arrangements will also need to include additional supervision from an 'external supervisor', an experienced community psychologist who is a registered psychologist.

This appropriately qualified external supervisor may or may not be external to the organisation.

² Principles and values of community psychology; Cultural Safety; Ethical Appropriateness; Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Biculturalism; Reflective Practice; Critical Multi-level analysis; Relationship Skills; Communication Skills; Research Skills; Community and Organisational Processes and Interventions.

The structure of placement supervision is outlined in the diagram below.



In cases where placement supervision comprises both a workplace supervisor and an external supervisor, both will contribute to the 3 assessments of the intern required for the PGDipPracPsych(Comm).

Students will be unable to enroll in the PGDipPracPsych(Comm) programme unless appropriate supervision is available, both university and workplace. As you are undertaking the PGDipPracPsych(Comm) to gain registration as a Psychologist in New Zealand through the New Zealand Psychologists' Registration Board under the Health Professional Competency Act (HPCA), your supervisors need to be psychologists registered under that Act. More details regarding university and workplace supervision are provided below.

Workplace Supervisor (normally Line Manager)

The workplace supervisor is most likely to be the intern's line manager. However, it is also important that the workplace supervisor be willing to take on the responsibility of supervising an intern, as distinct from an employee. In doing so, it is helpful if the workplace supervisor:

- Understands the field of community psychology, including its values, and their implications in practice, OR is willing to learn about community psychology values and approaches if not familiar with them.
- Recognises the internship as a learning and professional development experience, and not just as an employment situation.
- Has realistic expectations of the intern, and is willing to help them learn.
- Understands that their role as workplace supervisor is not only to direct and supervise the intern's work, but also to be available and willing to discuss professional and work issues as they arise.
- Be willing to meet with the university supervisor from time to time.

As noted earlier, you are undertaking the PGDipPracPsych(Comm) to gain registration as a Psychologist in New Zealand through the New Zealand Psychologists' Board under the Health Professional Competency Act (HPCA). Your workplace supervision arrangements need to include a psychologist who is registered under that Act. However, given the diversity of settings

in which internships occur, the reality is that it can often be difficult to have a registered psychologist as a workplace supervisor. Given this, there are a variety of ways that workplace supervision can be configured in order to meet the requirements of the New Zealand Psychologists Board.

If you are undertaking your internship as an employee of an organisation, you will almost certainly have a line manager or someone in the organisation to whom you report, and who exercises general oversight of your work on behalf of the organisation. If you are a contractor, you will likely have someone who plays a similar role in overseeing your contract and ensuring that you meet your contractual obligations. Normally, the person who manages, supervises or monitors you within your employment setting will become your workplace supervisor for internship purposes.

However, if that person is not a registered psychologist and cannot be delegated to an appropriate person within your organisation then your workplace supervision arrangements will also need to include additional supervision from an 'external supervisor' who is a registered psychologist, with a current Annual Practice Certificate. This appropriately qualified external supervisor may be external to the organisation in which you are working but must be local (ie within the same city/town/region).

External Supervisor

External supervision would normally occur approximately 2 hours per month. The external supervisor will ideally have an understanding of the organisation, with their focus being primarily on providing oversight of the intern's professional practice in the workplace (as opposed to completing PGDipPracPsych(Comm) assignments), including for example, assisting with workload issues, problem solving in the workplace and other specific organisational issues. Many organisations are recognising external supervision as a useful professional development tool for their workers.

University Supervision

The overall aims of the university supervisory relationship are to:

- Assist interns to, through the completion of all required coursework, demonstrate the core competencies
- Assist interns to ensure their practice is informed by theoretical knowledge
- Assist interns to engage in regular self-assessments and monitoring of progress
- Provide a forum for the discussion of professional and ethical issues
- Assist interns in the development of critical multi-level analysis and reflective practice skills
- Assist interns prepare for their final oral exam

Your university and academic supervisor will be registered with the New Zealand Psychologists Board and hold a current annual practicing certificate (APC). They take responsibility for arranging and providing weekly (or fortnightly) supervision (incorporating both group and individual) of your practice of psychology. Additional individual supervision sessions are

arranged with each student as needed. These can be face-to-face, phone, by video call or through video-conference services such as Zoom, Teams or Skype. Group supervision, which seeks to broaden your knowledge through the experiences of others, involves all students presently enrolled in the PGDipPracPsych(Comm) and one or more staff (who are appropriately qualified to supervise).

Benefits to the organisation

Benefits to your organisation of having an intern working for you include: having an employee being given additional intensive supervision from the University, and the intern's commitment to enhancing their competencies and using their learning for the benefit of the placement organisation. Interns have access to a strong network of experienced community psychologists and other human services professionals. They also have access to university resources such as the library and the computer system, which we believe can enhance their work and their value to the organisation. We are always happy to discuss ways in which the community psychology programme and the employing organisation can work together for mutual benefit.

The internship agreement

Our experience is that it is useful to clarify our respective roles and expectations in writing. Interns must include with their application for the PGDipPracPsych(Comm) a letter from their employer confirming that the position(s) can be used as an internship. A template is provided for this letter of agreement. In addition, on acceptance into the PGDipPracPsych(Comm), a formal agreement will be drafted between all relevant supervisory parties.

Appendix 1: Community Psychology Core Competencies

The New Zealand Psychologists Board defines core competencies as the minimum competencies that each practitioner should possess at the time of registration. In the context of registration with the Board competence is defined as the complex interaction of four major components: knowledge; skills; judgement; and diligence. The following descriptions are taken from the Board and considered useful in aiding you to understand what each of these components refers to³

- Knowledge involves having absorbed and understood a body of information sufficiently well to then understand and conceptualise the range of professional issues that one can reasonably expect to encounter. Knowledge is a necessary, but not sufficient foundation for competence.
- Skill is the ability to effectively apply knowledge in actual practice.
- Judgement involves knowing when to apply which skills, and under what circumstances. It includes self- reflection on and awareness of one's own values, experiences, attitudes, and social context, and how these may influence actions and perceived meaning. Good judgement increases the likelihood that choices made will be beneficial for the individuals, families, groups, communities and organisations with which psychologists work.
- Diligence requires the consistent application of knowledge, skills, and judgement in one's professional activities and taking care to give priority to the clients' needs. Diligence also encompasses striving to give the best service possible to each and every client.

Below are the core competencies you would be expected to have achieved on completion of the PGDipPracPsych(Comm). To grant a pass in the final oral examination, the panel needs to be satisfied that you have demonstrated and reached a minimum level of competency in each of these on completion of your internship. Achievement of some competencies can be achieved via your graduate training, for example the research competency is demonstrated via the completion of your thesis (at Masters or Doctoral level).

The competencies refer to the component skills or knowledge that contribute to the whole, and it is important to remember that the core competencies are intended to be read in a holistic manner. Ongoing assessment against the competencies will occur regularly during your coursework/ supervision meetings. During the examination process, consideration of each intern begins with a discussion of the extent to which you have exhibited each competency in your coursework submitted. Throughout this process, any competencies the examiners are uncertain about will generate questions that the intern will need to address.

³ New Zealand Psychologists Board. (2017). Continuing Competence Programme for Psychologists Practising in Aotearoa New Zealand. Wellington: New Zealand Psychologists Board. Retrieved from <chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://psychologistsboard.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/CCP-Guide-for-Participants-120717.pdf> July 2017. Page 3.

The competencies are grouped under 3 headings. These are:

- Foundational competencies relate to key principles and values of community psychology and to the ethical practice of community psychology. You are expected to have accomplished every competency in this group. You will be expected to have demonstrated them either during the internship (including relevant participation in community activities and organisations) and/or in the examination process.
- Practitioner competencies relate to generic technical skills. Like foundational competencies, you are expected to have accomplished every competency in this group. It is recognized some internships will not provide the opportunity to demonstrate all of these skills (e.g. some internships may not have a research component). However, to award a pass in the final examination, the panel must be satisfied that you have demonstrated each of these competencies at some stage during their training.
- Specialist competencies are those knowledge and skills specific to your role and setting. At the beginning of your internship, you will identify, with your supervisor, one or more specialist competencies. It is expected that accomplishment of these competencies will be evident in the assessment you submit.

In the following table each competency includes examples of ways in which attainment will normally be demonstrated by the intern. In relation to any one competency, it is not necessarily a requirement for you to have demonstrated the competency in all of the ways listed. Rather, the examination panel will consider the evidence available in determining whether, overall, you have achieved the minimum level in each competency.

Foundational Competencies

Principles and values of community psychology

The intern shall be familiar with, understand and be able to apply key principles of community psychology. This competency shall normally be demonstrated by their ability to:

- a) Articulate key values and principles of community psychology.
- b) Articulate psychological knowledge in a manner consistent with the best evidence available.
- c) Apply these to the analysis of social issues in Aotearoa.
- d) Show how his or her practice has been guided by them.

Cultural Safety

The intern shall practice in a culturally safe manner across a variety of settings. This competency shall normally be demonstrated by their ability to:

- a) Understand their own cultural values and practices and how these influence the way she or he experiences the world.
- b) Be aware of the impact of their behaviour and social positioning in relationship to people of cultures and social positioning other than their own.
- c) Practice in a manner which is appreciative of diverse realities.
- d) Build collaborative relationships with people of cultures other than their own.

- e) Recognise the need to seek appropriate cultural advice and to access such advice through supervision and professional support.

Ethics and the Law

- a) The intern shall practice in an ethically sound manner. This competency shall normally be demonstrated by their ability to:
- b) Understand and apply the Code of Ethics for Psychologists in Aotearoa.
- c) Identify ethical issues in their own practice and work through a sound process of information gathering, consultation and decision making in regard to those issues.
- d) Provide a rationale for their actions (conscious decision-making)
- e) Recognise the boundaries of their practice within the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (HPCA 2003).
- f) Maintain and update their own knowledge base and personal competence.
- g) Advocate for sound, ethical and legal practices.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi and bi-culturalism

The intern shall practice in a manner consistent with Te Tiriti o Waitangi. This competency shall normally be demonstrated by their ability to:

- a) Articulate the provisions of Te Tiriti and relate them to contemporary social issues.
- b) Understand the history of relationships between tangata whenua and the Crown.
- c) Advocate for the implementation of Treaty responsibilities.
- d) Understand the rationale for consultation with Māori and be able to work out how to determine an appropriate process in their work setting(s).
- e) Work appropriately in relation to Māori decision-making and authority structures.
- f) Demonstrate familiarity with common Māori protocol and understand the philosophy underlying these.
- g) Contribute to cultural justice initiatives from a clearly defined position of her/himself as tangata whenua or tau iwi.

Relationship skills

The intern shall be able to develop and sustain healthy, collaborative working relationships with others, including others who differ from her or him in significant ways. This competency shall normally be demonstrated by their ability to:

- a) Understand and implement the principle of reciprocity in relationships.
- b) Develop good working relationships with others, including others who have either more or less power.
- c) Relate effectively to people from a diverse range of backgrounds.
- d) Handle conflict in a constructive way.
- e) Bring to relationships the knowledge and value base of community psychology.

Reflective practice

The intern shall practice in a self-reflective manner. This competency shall normally be demonstrated by their ability to:

- a) Critically reflect on their own practice in a process of continual improvement.
- b) Be self-aware about their abilities and limitations and practice only within the limits of their professional competence.
- c) Plan and monitor their workload and implement appropriate mechanisms for coping with stress.
- d) Plan for and implement ongoing professional development.
- e) Understand the value of supervision and to engage in regular supervision.
- f) Seek out and maintain professional networks.

Critical, multi-level analysis

The intern shall have strong critical analysis skills, including the ability to analyse social issues at multiple levels from societal level processes to the individual level. This competency shall normally be demonstrated by their ability to:

- a) Analyse and synthesize complex information.
- b) Undertake well-reasoned critiques of research and scholarship relevant to their area of practice.
- c) Undertake well-reasoned critiques of policy relevant to their area of practice.
- d) Observe, analyse and critically reflect on community and organisational processes.
- e) Implement ongoing evaluation based on the best evidence available.

Practitioner Competencies

Communication skills

The intern shall be able to communicate effectively, both in written and oral forms, in a wide range of settings to a variety of audiences. This competency shall normally be demonstrated by their ability to:

- a) Produce clear, concise technical and academic reports.
- b) Write in a direct, user-friendly manner.
- c) Adjust their writing style for the intended audience.
- d) Make oral presentations which can convey complex ideas in a manner which engages the audience.
- e) Communicate in a way that encourages change.

Research skills

The intern shall be able to conduct and evaluate applied community research. This competency shall normally be demonstrated by their ability to:

- a) Design and carry out a small scale research project in a manner appropriate for the context, including writing a proposal, completing an ethical review application, collecting and analysing both qualitative and quantitative data, and writing a report. Critically evaluate research and give appropriate advice to others about research findings.
- b) Write a literature review.
- c) Understand ethical issues relating to research, including researchers' responsibilities to diverse stakeholders.

Community and organisational processes and interventions

The intern shall be able to assess community and organisational processes and to intervene appropriately in such processes. This competency shall normally be demonstrated by their ability to:

- a) Negotiate entry into a setting, establish professional relationships and identify key dynamics and decision-making processes.
- b) Design processes to enhance collaboration between people with diverse interests.
- c) Understand community development approaches and pathways for social change in accordance with the best evidence available.
- d) Understand and promote participatory decision-making processes in communities and organisations.
- e) Evaluate the impact of the intervention.

Specialist Competencies

Interns work in a diverse range of settings. Safe, competent practice will require the mastery of knowledge and skills specific to your role and setting. At the beginning of your internship, you will identify, with your university and/or workplace supervisor/s, one or more specialist competencies. These will be expected to include:

- Specialist knowledge competencies will include a knowledge of the organisational context of your setting, regulatory frameworks (i.e. relevant legislation, regulations and policies), and research literature relevant to your area of practice. For example, an intern working in environmental protection would be expected to be familiar with the relevant organisational context (e.g. the roles of local and regional councils, Department of Conservation, Ministry of the Environment, environmental lobby groups etc.), and regulatory frameworks (e.g. Resource Management Act etc.), and literature relevant to the area of resource management;
- Specialist skill competencies will include those skills, not listed as core competencies, which are specifically required for safe and effective practice in your setting. For example, an intern working as a policy analyst might need to demonstrate skills in consultation and writing policy documents over and above the more generic skills listed under Foundational and Practitioner competencies above. Similarly, an intern working as a researcher might need to demonstrate a higher degree of competency in research skills than interns working in other settings.

Appendix 2: Template for Letter of Support



Postgraduate Diploma in the Practice of Psychology (Community) PGDipPracPsych(Comm)

Agreement for Applicants Applying for Entry to the PGDipPracPsych(Comm)
Please ensure that following statements are included in the letter of support from your employer.

Tena koe,

This letter confirms that we, *(Insert name of organisation)* support the application made by *(Insert name of applicant)* for entry into the Postgraduate Diploma in the Practice of Psychology(Comm) at the University of Waikato.

We understand that in confirming our support, we agree to:

- 1) The position held by *(Insert name of applicant)* being used for the purposes of an internship, being fully aware of what this requires (coursework required; supervision requirements; weekly coursework/supervision meeting attendance);

- 2) The following workplace supervision arrangements:

Workplace supervisor: _____

External supervisor (if required): _____

- 3) Participation by *(Insert name of applicant)* in the required supervisory and course work, specifically weekly meeting attendance.

We also confirm that we have been fully briefed by *(Insert name of applicant)* regarding the requirements of the PGDipPracPsych(Comm), and have been provided with the opportunity to have any questions answered.

We understand that, should *(Insert name of applicant)* be accepted into the PGDipPracPsych(Comm) a formal agreement between the intern, university supervisor, and workplace and external supervisor will be signed⁴.

[Signed, *Organisation*]

⁴ A template for this formal agreement is provided for your information.

Appendix 3: Template for Internship Agreement



Postgraduate Diploma in the Practice of Psychology (Community) PGDipPracPsych(Comm)

Formal agreement between an intern, university supervisor and workplace supervisors for applicants who have been accepted for entry into the PGDipPracPsych(Comm)

This is the agreement between:

Intern name	
Workplace supervisor name	
External supervisor name	
University supervisor name	

1) Purpose

- This agreement refers to the internship of *[Name]*, to be undertaken within *[Organisation]*
- The internship is a requirement of the PGDipPracPsych(Comm) at the University of Waikato.
- The purpose of the internship is to provide a period of supervised practice in community psychology during which the intern is able to integrate theory and practice, and prepare for a final oral examination.

2) Term

- The internship shall run for a period of not less than 40 weeks(full-time) or 80 weeks (part-time)
- The start date of the internship shall be: _____

3) Supervision

- In consideration of the purposes of the internship, the intern shall receive both workplace supervision and university supervision. Workplace supervision will focus primarily on practical matters relating to *(insert intern name)* obligations as an employee and professional development. University supervision will focus primarily on theoretical matters and overseeing the intern's work in terms of meeting university requirements for the PGDipPracPsych(Comm).
- Workplace Supervision: *(Insert Workplace Supervisor name/s)* will provide workplace/external supervision, including completing of the three assessments of *(insert intern name)* work.
- University supervision: *(Insert University Supervisor name)* will provide university supervision.

4) Access to and use of work-related information for internship purposes

- a. As part of the requirements of the internship, *(insert intern name)* will complete weekly practice logs, five case studies, and a work folio reports reflecting on their experience in *(Insert Organisation name)*. The case studies and work folio reports will be submitted to the university for examination, but only after *(insert Workplace Supervisor name)* has had an opportunity to comment on a draft of them.
- b. For the purpose of preparing case studies and work folio reports, *(insert intern name)* will be able to refer to and quote from those documents to which they normally has access to as part of their duties, providing such use is properly acknowledged
- c. It is recognised that some information included in the case studies and work folio may be of a sensitive nature. Assessment material will be treated as confidential and available only to university supervisors and examiners for the purposes of reviewing *(insert intern name)* progress and conducting the internship examination.

5) Study leave

- a. *(insert intern name)* shall have permission to attend the first five coursework/supervision meetings(regardless of full-time/part-time status).
- b. *(insert intern name)* shall have permission to attend regular weekly (fulltime) or fortnightly (part-time) coursework/supervision meeting hours (see Moodle for schedule of meetings).

6) Intern's responsibilities as an employee

- a. Unless specifically provided for in this agreement, nothing in it shall suspend or alter the usual responsibilities accountabilities of *(insert intern name)* as an employee of *(insert Organisation name)*.

7) Dispute resolution

- a. If any dispute arises out of this agreement the parties shall resolve the dispute to their mutual satisfaction by way of negotiation, such negotiation to be conducted with honesty and integrity.
- b. If any dispute is unable to be resolved by mutual satisfaction of the parties, it shall be referred to a mediator agreed to by the parties.

Signed by:

	Signature	Organisation	Date
Intern			
Workplace supervisor			
External supervisor			
University supervisor			

Acknowledgements

The following are sources which have informed the compilation of this handbook:

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