

UPEI Doctor of Psychology (PsyD)
Frequently Asked Questions
Updated August 2024

1. Is the program accredited by the Canadian Psychological Association?

Yes. The University of Prince Edward Island's PsyD in Clinical Psychology is accredited by the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA). The initial accreditation is for a three-year term dating from the accreditation site visit of October, 2022. A reaccreditation site visit will take place in advance of that three-year date.

The CPA Accreditation Panel Office can be contacted via:

Stewart Madon, PhD, C.Psych.

Registrar, Accreditation Panel

accreditation@cpa.ca

Tel: 613-237-2144 ext. 333

2. Is it necessary to have a dissertation supervisor prior to making application or enrolling?

No. Students are expected to get to know faculty members during the first year of the program and then submit a Dissertation Supervisor Agreement before the end of the first year.

3. Is previous completion of a master's degree in psychology required?

No. The program welcomes applications from students who have completed a bachelor's degree in psychology, including a thesis-based honours program. Applicants with a master's degree are eligible to apply.

4. Can course credit for previously completed graduate work be transferred to this program?

Students who have previously completed course work similar to courses in the PsyD curriculum will not normally receive transfer credit. They are invited to consult with the instructor well in advance of the course so that any appropriate modifications to standard assignments or other coursework can be considered to maximize student learning.

5. An admission criterion is "Honours Bachelor's degree in Psychology including an honours thesis, or equivalent." What would be considered equivalent to an honour's thesis?

For applicants whose undergraduate major in psychology is from an institution that offered an honours thesis route, but which they did not take, no other research experience from their undergraduate degree can serve as an equivalent. Subsequent upgrading of their initial degree to an honours degree with honours thesis would count, and completion of a thesis-based Masters degree in a related discipline, after the undergraduate psychology major, would count as equivalent.

For applicants whose undergraduate major in psychology is from an institution that did not offer an honours thesis route—such as is the case in some international institutions—then an honours thesis equivalent would involve completion of an independent and supervised research project from beginning to end, typically spanning at least two academic semesters, which usually includes all of the following components: project proposal and literature review, development of methods, research ethics board submission (if required), data gathering and analysis, writing up of the thesis, and defense / dissemination of the work.

6. An admission criterion is an Advanced Statistics course. What is expected in the course?

An Advanced Statistics course does not necessarily carry that course title; it is a second statistic course following a statistics course that served as its prerequisite. Taking two different introductory statistics courses in different departments does not count. Taking two courses that combine statistics and core research methods does not count. Even with these restrictions, the content of advanced statistics courses can vary across institutions. Students entering the PsyD program are expected to arrive with a working knowledge of probability distributions, sampling, measurement, statistical power, and the selection of appropriate research designs and statistical tests, including basic assumptions of parametric techniques. Solid notions of hypothesis testing, and statistical significance are expected. Students are expected to have a working knowledge of variable types (independent, dependent, categorical, continuous); validity and reliability; design (correlational/experimental or independent/repeated measures); variance, standard deviation, deviance; p -values and confidence intervals; power and error; effect sizes; bias and outliers; parametric assumptions.

Students who find any of these concepts unfamiliar, or who have struggled with them in the past, are expected to do remedial study before joining the program.

7. Is the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) required?

No.

8. How are application materials submitted?

All application materials are submitted via the application portal. These application materials include a curriculum vitae / resume, personal statement in which we ask you to comment on specific matters important to the program, responses to essay prompts, post-secondary official transcripts submitted directly by the institutions, language testing (if applicable), and letters of reference uploaded directly by letter writers. All materials, including official transcripts and letters of reference, must be received by the application deadline. The full set of directions for supplementary materials is visible within the application portal after payment of the application fee.

9. Is there an admissions interview process?

Yes. The application deadline is December 1st of the year prior to the one in which a student hopes to begin the program. (For example, applications for September, 2026 admission would be due by December 1st, 2025.) The admissions committee evaluates all applications and creates a list of those applicants who will be invited for an interview in January. All interviews are conducted via video-conference. Offers of admission are made by early February. Applicants who receive an offer of admission have until April 15th to accept or decline. Applicants who do not receive an offer of admission may be placed on a waitlist and may be offered admission at a later date if seats are available. The program does not share information about an applicant's rank on the waitlist.

10. If I am offered admission to the program, what do I do next?

If you are offered admission to the program you must either accept or decline the offer by the April 15th deadline. (We are, of course, happy to know your decision well in advance of that!) Before attending the program you must complete all educational entrance requirements, prior to beginning classes. This includes ensuring all requirements of the honours bachelor's degree are completed.

11. How intensive is the workload for the program?

The program is intensive. Students address all the course work—which is of significantly greater depth than undergraduate studies—and the practicum experience, and dissertation in only three years before eligibility for internship. Although the dissertation is less extensive than a PhD dissertation, it still is a substantial contribution to the knowledge. This is a full 12-month a year program, where students are as busy as people you might know who are in, for example, medical school, but without the summers off.

12. How intensive are the writing requirements?

As prospective students explore our program, it is important to consider the significant requirements for writing throughout the curriculum.

Course work in the program integrates a substantial amount of writing, providing a variety of formal and informal opportunities for students to integrate course learnings into their writing. Students should expect to be working simultaneously on multiple course-based writing assignments (some smaller; some larger) at any given time.

During practicum placements, which overlap with course work, formal writing opportunities allow students to learn the formats characteristic of the discipline. During practica focused on psychological assessment, students are required to complete multiple (a minimum of 7) psychological reports that integrate client history, collateral information, and psychometric data toward the development of a clinical formulation. These reports can vary in length depending on the nature of the assessment; it is not unusual for reports to be up to 20 pages in length. Report completion is time-sensitive so that clients receive important documentation in a timely manner.

Students also complete a major clinical dissertation, which overlaps with course work and practica, that culminates in a thesis document of considerable complexity and length. The PsyD clinical dissertation is thought to be somewhat larger than many masters projects and smaller than many Ph.D. projects.

Students considering graduate training in clinical psychology need to arrive at graduate school with advanced writing skills that are beyond what is typical in undergraduate training. A solid command of the basic skills necessary for written communication is required, along with strong skills in integrating multiple sources of information into a well-written narrative. If difficulties with written expression have been present at the undergraduate level or in other programs, it is likely that the writing demands of the PsyD program will present notable challenges.

13. How would I fund my time in the program?

Students receive \$10,000 funding in a Knowledge Translation stipend each of the first three years of study. (The final 12-month internships come with a stipend.) No Research Assistantships or Teaching Assistantships are offered. While some students have been successful in securing internal scholarships or external funding, there are no guarantees of this. There is not time for significant external work in the program. The program is only a match for students who have existing resources or borrowing capacity to meet their needs in those first three years beyond the \$10,000 a year stipend.

14. What is the program's policy on external employment?

The Doctor of Psychology program is a full time (12 months / year) and intensive four-year doctoral program that is designed to train students to become competent clinical psychologists. With a workload that consists of considerable course work, practicum training, knowledge translation outreach, and a full time predoctoral internship, the

PsyD program strongly recommends that students do not work at all in external employment.

At the same time, the program understands that it can be challenging to live with a very limited budget through grad school. Should students need to work in external employment to support themselves financially the program strongly recommends that the external employment not exceed 10 hours per week. With such an intensive schedule of academic and practice components, students who engage in external employment are at significant risk of falling behind and not engaging with the doctoral program at levels required to become ready for practice as a licensed clinical psychologist. It is the responsibility of students to balance any external work demands in a manner that does not interfere with progress in the program.

The program does not support students engaging in clinical work that occurs outside the program.

15. Can I practice as a clinical psychologist after completing all aspects of the program?

After completing all aspects of the PsyD program at UPEI, graduates are eligible to apply for registration as a psychologist (or as a psychologist candidate in jurisdictions which require a period of post-degree supervised practice) with the appropriate regulatory authority in the jurisdiction in which they wish to work. In addition to the educational requirement, most regulatory bodies require the completion of the Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology, oral or written examination(s) about ethics, standards, and local laws governing psychology, and evidence of sufficient supervised practice.

16. What are the requirements for criminal record and vulnerable sector checks?

The Doctor of Psychology program requires a Certified Criminal Record Check and Vulnerable Sector Check, completed not earlier than January 1st of the year of admission to the program, from your local law enforcement agency. Documentation of these checks must be received by the PsyD Administrative Assistant no later than **August 1st** of the year of Admission; if this deadline is not met, the offer of admission may be withdrawn.

Students can expect that the criminal record and vulnerable sector checks will need to be repeated periodically to meet currency requirements of placement sites.

11. What are the requirements for immunization?

The Doctor of Psychology program requires receipt by the PsyD Administrative Assistant of certification of having met immunization requirements no later than **August 1st** in the year of Admission. If this deadline is not met, the offer of admission may be withdrawn.

The following are required:

- DPTP (Diphtheria/Tetanus/Pertussis/Polio); Primary Series (Initial 4 doses)
- Tdap Booster (Diphtheria/Tetanus/Pertussis); must have been received within the last 10 years
- MMR (Measles/Mumps/Rubella)
- Varicella (Chicken Pox)
- Hepatitis B (3 dose requirement)
- Two Step Tuberculosis Test (Mantoux)
- Varicella Titre (if history of disease or no record of immunization)
- Hepatitis B Titre (result must be “immune” or booster may be required)
- Influenza Immunization may be required yearly and, if so, documentation may be required.

Note: As of April 28, 2023, COVID-19 protocols are no longer in effect. We ask that you continue to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses by getting fully vaccinated and/or your booster shots when eligible. Vaccination is an important way to prevent serious illness, but vaccines become less effective over time, so it's important to keep your vaccines current to help protect you and others. You are strongly encouraged to become fully vaccinated, including obtaining your booster shots, when eligible and where possible. Visit the Government of PEI's [COVID-19 vaccine web page](#) to learn about expanded options to get vaccinated and booster doses. (Please note: all international students over the age of 18 travelling to Canada need to be fully vaccinated—visit the [Government of Canada page](#) for more information.)

12 What are the requirements for Psychology Practitioner Liability Insurance?

PsyD students must carry liability insurance beginning **October** of their first year of study. This can be arranged after arriving on campus. The most straightforward route to purchasing insurance is through the plan offered for the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) and Council of Provincial Associations of Psychologists (CPAP). To participate, one must first be a member of either CPA **or** a participating provincial psychological association. The current CPA student affiliate fee is \$75, and the current Psychological Association of PEI student membership fee is \$20. Under this plan liability insurance is renewable every June 1st and active for one year; the current premium is \$274 for a full year, and the fee is prorated for those joining the plan part way through a year.