

**Guidelines and Procedures for Decisions regarding Exemptions  
for Students with Advanced Standing in the  
Clinical Psychology PhD Program**

Approved CPC April 19, 2013, rev May 10, 2013



*Faculty of Science*

**Note: Advanced standing refers to all students in the Clinical Psychology PhD Program who enter the Program with a Master's degree, regardless of whether the degree is in Psychology or whether it has a clinical focus.**

**Process**

1. Once students have accepted the offer of admission into the Clinical Psychology PhD Program, those with Master's degrees are reviewed to determine exemptions. Students are not reviewed for exemptions prior to being admitted or prior to their confirmation of acceptance.<sup>1</sup> Prior to admission/acceptance, the Director of Clinical Training (DCT), if asked by the student, will share with the student the process that is taken to evaluate for exemptions and the likely outcome. However, this information is informal until the time the student accepts admission into the Program.
2. Once the student with advanced standing (e.g., Master's degree) accepts our admission offer, the student is sent an email by the Program Secretary asking for detailed information that will allow the DCT, in consultation with course instructor(s), the Associate DCT and/or the Field Placement Coordinator (FPC), to evaluate previously completed courses for exemptions.
3. In order to be evaluated for course exemptions, the student is asked to submit:
  - a. A table listing the course(s) the student is requesting to be exempted from, as well as the calendar description(s) of the course(s) that the student believes fulfill the Clinical Psychology PhD course credit.
    - i. For example, if the student is requesting to be exempted from PSYO 6102.03, Psychological Assessment: Child, the student would include this in the first column of the table; the next column would list the corresponding course title(s) and calendar description(s) of the course(s) that he/she had taken in his/her Master's degree that is believed to be equivalent.
  - b. The course syllabus for each of the courses from his/her Master's degree that he/she believes fulfill a course requirement in the Dalhousie Clinical PhD Program.
4. Students with a Master's degree may apply for exemption for one of the two required Teaching Assistantships. In order to be granted exemption for one TAship, the course outline(s) of courses for which the student TAed must be submitted.
5. Students with a Master's degree from an applied psychology program (e.g., clinical psychology, school psychology) may also be eligible to apply for exemption for practicum hours. Regardless of the number of hours completed in such a Master's program, the maximum allowable exemption toward the practicum requirement in the Clinical Psychology PhD Program is 300 practicum hours. In order to be evaluated for exemption from practicum hours, the student is requested to submit:

- a. The official tracking of the student's practicum/internship hours completed for his/her Master's degree.
  - b. A statement (email) to the DCT from the coordinator of the student's Master's program confirming the student's total hours.
6. The DCT will review the information submitted by the student and will consult with the course instructors for the courses the student is requesting an exemption. The course instructor can review the submitted information as well as contact the student for additional information.
7. At a closed meeting, the submission is reviewed by the DCT in consultation with the Associate DCT and/or the Field Placement Coordinator. Feedback from the course instructor(s) is shared by the DCT with the group and this information is considered when final decisions about exemptions are made.
8. A formal letter detailing the decision regarding exemptions is sent via email to the student (and copied to the Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC) and the student's file). Outcomes of the review include that the student may not receive an exemption, may be exempted from the entire course, may be asked to complete certain components of the course, or may be asked to audit the course<sup>2</sup>.
9. Students with questions or concerns about the decision are encouraged to discuss these with the DCT. All concerns brought to the DCT are revisited at a DCT meeting (with the Associate DCT and/or the Field Placement Coordinator). Any changes are communicated to the student via another formal letter sent by email. If no changes are made, the rationale for the decision is communicated to the student.
10. If the student is not satisfied with the decision made by the DCT, in collaboration with the course instructor(s), Associate DCT and/or the Field Placement Coordinator, then the student's concerns would be brought to the Clinical Program Committee (CPC) and discussed in a closed meeting. The CPC's vote would represent the final decision, unless the student chooses to put forth a formal grievance. At this point, the Program would follow the procedures outlined by the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS).

Footnotes:

1. The decision to wait until after the student accepts our offer of admission was made as it is a lengthy and time consuming process to conduct the review to determine exemptions. The program does not want to engage in this process if the student is unsure of whether he/she will accept our admission offer.
2. Given that some of our courses are lifespan focused, students may be exempted from only certain components of the course. For example, a student coming into our program with a school psychology master's degree will have training in child psychology but not adult psychology and so would be required to complete all adult components of the courses. Also, there may be situations where a student's past course does not cover all the material in one of our courses (e.g., a previous statistics course may not have covered a certain statistical technique) and in these situations we may require that the student complete this component in our course, even though he/she is generally exempted from the course. In situations where partial exemption is given, a student may be required to complete an independent studies course to cover these components.