



Educational Psychology
Programme Directors

Joint Professional Liaison Group (JPLG)

Shared position on Y3 trainees' progression in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Joint Professional Liaison Group (JPLG) shared position on Y3 trainees' progression in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

April 2020

This paper was produced by members of JPLG (AEP, DECP, DECPTC, NAPEP and the National Programme Directors' Group) in response to the unprecedented national context. The Covid-19 Pandemic has led to the declaration of a national state of emergency, with schools and universities closed, all public gatherings prohibited and everyone being required to stay home and to work remotely.

The HCPC has recognised the impact that this may have on the initial training of its regulated professions and provides the following advice:

**"We recognise that in highly challenging circumstances, education providers may need to depart from established procedures to continue with education and training.*

Our Standards are designed to be flexible, to ensuring those who complete programmes meet relevant proficiency standards. Therefore, in managing the risks associated with COVID-19, you can adapt your plans so learners can continue to undertake programmes, and do not require regulatory approval to implement these changes.

We recognise the extraordinary nature of this public health matter, and that we must be supportive and proportionate in our requirements and expectations. We understand that measures may need to be put in place quickly, and reviewed and changed regularly, depending on the challenges posed in both academic and practice-based settings.

With this flexibility, we expect you to use professional judgement and experience to inform the implementation of changes to manage COVID-19 risks.

In doing so, you must ensure that any measures put in place continue to provide the quality of teaching and learning required to meet our Standards, and to ensure individuals meet the relevant proficiency Standards on completion of the award.

We recognise that it may no longer be practical for some students to complete their minimum placement hours, due to the unavailability of suitable placement sites. Our standards are flexible in this regard and do not prescribe a minimum that must be achieved. We expect education providers to consider what is necessary to ensure learners have met the relevant learning outcomes through any practice-based learning. On this basis, it may be possible to adjust the minimum practice-based learning hours you set. If you do make an adjustment, please ensure you are clear on the reasons for doing so, and also ensure you can evidence this."

The bodies that regulate the EP profession have responded to the HCPC's comments by offering a degree of flexibility to support those nearing the completion of their professional training. The BPS has agreed to focus on trainees having achieved the required professional competencies, rather than numbers of placement days completed, as an interim measure during the state of emergency. The following principles have guided this paper:

- The focus is on supporting high quality, competent trainees to join the EP profession at this challenging time;
- Although school-based EPS placements have stopped as a result of government directives about the critical importance of social distancing, trainee EPs and all other EPs in local authority services are engaging in professionally relevant remote working activities. These will be counted as placement days;
- Principal EPs are keen for competent trainees to progress to join the profession within the usual timeframes due to the considerable shortages in the workforce.

A number of specific principles were agreed to guide Y3 Trainee Educational Psychologists' (TEPs') progression:

- To ensure that a cohort of newly qualified EPs, who are eligible for HCPC registration, will be able to join the profession within the usual time cycles.
- Professional standards of proficiency (HCPC) and professional competencies (BPS) will continue to guide all TEP progression. Government guidance, at this time, requires remote professional activity for all EPs and TEPs. Therefore, alternative placement activities suited to this mode of work, which address these learning outcomes should be agreed between TEPs, Supervisors, PEPs and University Tutors, and will count as placement activity.

The following 2 points were agreed:

1) In most cases TEPs entering their final term of training should have met the vast majority, if not all, of the HCPC Standards of Proficiency and the British Psychological Society's Professional Competencies and are expected to successfully complete their practice placements. Those who have also completed the thesis, including successfully completing any amendments will complete their studies and progress to employment, and will be eligible to join the full HCPC register, to the usual timeframes.

2) All TEPs will be subject to the usual assessment procedures with regard to achieving and demonstrating all of the required professional standards and competencies. In a few cases, constraints on educational psychology service delivery, associated with the Covid-19 response, may prevent a TEP engaging in a sufficient range of experience and activities to enable proficiency to be gained and demonstrated, for the successful completion of their studies. In such cases it is anticipated that professional experiences in their employing EP service will be used to facilitate the acquisition of these outstanding competencies and proficiencies as part of their induction programme. Once all conditional requirements are met (and thesis has been completed) they will be eligible to apply to join the HCPC register. [To be entered on Appendix 1 in agreement by placement and university tutors and TEP for sharing with new employer]

NB Where there are more general concerns about aspects of a trainee's professional development these should be addressed through targets agreed between the university and

placement provider. Meeting these targets will be a condition for the TEP's progression and will require additional time, further professional opportunities and ongoing monitoring, in order to judge if they have achieved the proficiencies and competencies required to complete their training.

In summary, Training Providers, Placement Supervisors and Year 3 TEPs will make best use of the opportunities that are available to them to enable training to be completed and progression to fully qualified status as EPs, registered with the HCPC, to occur in or around September 2020, for most current Year 3 TEPs.

*Ref: <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/covid-19/advice/advice-for-education-providers/>

APPENDIX 1
Record of BPS Educational Psychology Core Competencies

This form recognises that due to the exceptional situation relating to COVID 19, face-to-face contact with clients has been significantly curtailed for all trainee EPs.



The
British
Psychological
Society



<p>Educational Psychology competencies still at the acquisition stage, where more experience is needed</p>	
--	--

NB: “Ultimate responsibility for the summative assessment of trainee educational psychologists’ competence must lie with the education provider” (BPS, 2017, 2.4.5)