

The European Certificate of Psychotherapy

Preamble: In 1991, the European Association for Psychotherapy was founded in Vienna, Austria by a number of European countries. It now brings together nearly 200 organisations, from about 30 European countries, with both national organisations and european-wide organisations in many different modalities, and by that more than 50,000 psychotherapists.

The European Association for Psychotherapy (hereafter, the EAP) is concerned to protect the interest of this profession and the public it serves, by ensuring that the profession functions at an appropriate level of training and practice. One of its immediate aims is to establish an European Certificate of Psychotherapy (hereafter, the ECP), which will help ensure that psychotherapists are trained to the EAP's standards and which will help guarantee the mobility of professional psychotherapists. This is in accordance with the aims of the World Health Organisation (WHO), the non-discrimination accord valid within the framework of the European Union (EU), and the principle of freedom of movement of persons and services. The European Certificate of Psychotherapy is in alignment with the European Standard EN 45013.

The 1990 Strasbourg Declaration on Psychotherapy, established by the EAP, is the bedrock of it's commitment to creating a compatible and independent profession of psychotherapy across Europe.

The Strasbourg Declaration on Psychotherapy

- Psychotherapy is an independent scientific discipline, the practice of which represents an independent and free profession.
- Training in psychotherapy takes place at an advanced, qualified and scientific level.
- The multiplicity of the methods of psychotherapy is assured and guaranteed.
- Psychotherapy training includes theory, self-experience and practice under supervision. Adequate knowledge is gained of further processes of psychotherapy.
- Access to training is through various preliminary qualifications, in particular in human and social sciences.

Strasbourg, October 21st, 1990

Definitions: The revised Statutes of the EAP (Feb, 2001) define this document as: "... a European Certificate of Psychotherapy Document (ECP Document) to provide guidelines for the procedure and criteria of training and qualifications". (Statutes: * 2.5); and it is also mentioned in * 4.1.2.1; * 4.1.3.1. There is also mention of: "... a register of psychotherapists who have qualified for the European Certificate of Psychotherapy". (Statutes: * 13.1); and the European Training Standards Committee (ETSC), the National Umbrella Organisations Committee (NUOC), the European Wide Organisations Committee (EWOC), and the Registration Committee are established as sub-committees of the Governing Board (Statutes: * 5.2.5).

The Scientific Validation Committee is a sub-committee of the ETSC.

Documents: The By-Laws of the EAP's Governing Board and all its committees & sub-committees are in the process of being clarified (2001-2002) and procedures for accrediting Training Organisations have yet to be worked out by the ETSC. Currently the revised Statutes of the EAP; EAP's Statement of Ethical Principles; the Register of ECP holders; and this document are the main papers of the EAP.

ECP: CRITERIA & PROCEDURES FOR ITS AWARD

1. Bodies involved in the award of the ECP:

1.1. The European Association for Psychotherapy (EAP)

1.1.1. Unless otherwise specified, reference to the EAP should be taken to mean the Governing Board of the EAP, or any body within the EAP authorised by the Governing Board. In matters dealing with the ECP, this would usually be the European Training Standards Committee (ETSC) and the Registration Committee.

1.2. National Awarding Organisation

1.2.1. A National Awarding Organisation (hereafter, NAO) must be an organisational member of the EAP in good standing.

1.2.2. A National Umbrella Organisation (hereafter NUO) is a psychotherapy organisation in a European country which demonstrably represents the broadest range of differing psychotherapy approaches, containing the largest number of practitioners and adhering to the principles of the EAP may be appointed a National Umbrella Organisation by the Governing Board. The organisation must be legally registered and possess an accountable administrative structure as a constitution that is compatible with the constitution of the EAP and a written code of ethics compatible with the ethical guidelines of the EAP.

(EAP Statutes: * 4.1.2)

1.2.3. A National Umbrella Organisation may be appointed a National Awarding Organisation as stipulated below. (EAP Statutes: * 4.1.2.1)

1.2.3.1. To become a NAO, a National Umbrella Organisation (NUO) must be accredited by the EAP as having:

- (1) Ethical guidelines which are binding on any practitioners which it may recommend for the award of the Certificate;
- (2) Disciplinary and complaints procedures which may lead to disciplinary action against any practitioners which it may recommend for the award of the Certificate and, if appropriate, their removal from the Register.
- (3) Training standards, compatible with the EAP, and methods of applying them.

1.2.3.2. The NUO will be referred to the National Umbrella Organisations Committee (NUOC) who has a process to check the details of their application. This process may involve the Registration Committee and the ETSC. If the organisation seems suitable, they will be recommended to the Governing Board for approval as a NAO.

1.2.3.3. Initially, if it is wished to be able to recommend practitioners for the award of the Certificate who have not completed an accredited training and are currently practising, the NAO must also have suitable procedures for 'grand-parenting' those practitioners.

1.2.3.4. The NAO must reapply every five years to renew its awarding status. There may be a fee for considering reapplications, which will be set by the EAP. These criteria are in the Procedures for NUOC.

1.2.4. NAOs represent psychotherapy in that country, approve Training Organisations, register and recommend practitioners for the ECP.

1.3. European Wide Accrediting Organisation

1.3.1. The European Wide Accrediting Organisation (hereafter, EWAO) must be an organisational member of the EAP in good standing.

1.3.2. A European Wide Organisation (EWO) is a psychotherapy organisation which provides training in, or which represents a training in, at least six European countries in a modality that is recognised as scientifically valid by the EAP and may be appointed as a European Wide Organisation by the Governing Board (EAP Statutes: * 4.1.3)

1.3.3. A European Wide Organisation may be appointed a European Wide Accrediting Organisation as stipulated below. (EAP Statutes: * 4.1.3.1)

1.3.3.1. The EWAO must have, in each of six or more European countries, either, a training at or above the level required for the ECP; or, have, as members, professional organisations with trainings at this level. It must have the large majority of its members living in European countries.

1.3.3.2. To become an EWAO, a European Wide Organisation (EWO) must be accredited by the EAP, which requires that:

- (1) Its accreditation processes must be at or above a standard compatible with the award of the ECP. It must represent a specific modality of psychotherapy as demonstrated by the criteria in * 4.
- (2) This modality must be: either, clearly distinct from any other modality represented by a European Wide Organisation in the EAP; or it must represent the largest number of practitioners in this modality of any European Wide Organisation member of the EAP.
- (3) It must be the only EWAO for that modality.

1.3.3.3. The EWO will be referred to the European Wide Organisations Committee (EWOC) who will have a process to check the details of their application. This process may involve the Registration Committee and the ETSC. If the organisation seems suitable, they will be recommended to the Governing Board for approval as an EWAO.

1.3.3.4. The EWAO must reapply every five years to renew its accrediting status. There may be a fee for considering reapplications, which will be set by the EAP. These criteria are in the Procedures for EWOC.

1.3.4. EWAOs accredit Training Organisations and register psychotherapists in their method or modality of psychotherapy.

1.4. Training Organisations

1.4.1. Training Organisations must be members in good standing of their country's NAO and of the relevant EWAO.

1.4.2. Training Organisations must be appropriately registered, and have their administration and finances in good order. The Training Organisation must have appropriate ethical standards and complaints procedures for its trainees.

1.4.3. A training programme, accepted by the EAP as leading to the ECP, must conform to the criteria of the ECP, must be accredited by the relevant EWAO and must be approved by the relevant NAO.

1.4.4. Only trainees successfully graduating from an accredited and approved 4-year (minimum) training programme in psychotherapy undertaken at such a Training Organisation as defined above will be eligible to apply for the ECP.

1.4.5. Criteria and procedures by which Training Organisations are accepted by the EAP are established by the ETSC.

2. Conditions for the award of the European Certificate of Psychotherapy:

2.1. The procedure and conditions for the award of the ECP will normally be determined by the European Training Standards Committee (ETSC) of the Governing Board of the EAP.

2.2. The ECP will be awarded to practitioners of psychotherapy (hereafter, practitioners) whose accredited and approved training has been fully completed and who are committed to professional and ethical standards consistent with those of the EAP.

2.3. A register of people who have been awarded the ECP, the European Register of Psychotherapists (hereafter the ERP), will be published and maintained by the EAP.

3. Psychotherapy modalities:

3.1. The method of psychotherapy used (hereafter, modality) must be well defined and distinguishable from other psychotherapy modalities and have a clear theoretical basis in the human sciences.

3.2. The theory must be integrated with the practice, be applicable to a broad range of problems, and have been demonstrated to be effective.

3.3. The scientific validity of the modality must have been accepted by the EAP and it must have been recognised in several European countries as valid by relevant professional organisations.

4. Length and content of psychotherapy training:

4.1. The total duration of the training will not be less than 3200 hours, spread over a minimum of seven years, with the first three years being the equivalent of a university degree. The later four years of which must be in a training specific to psychotherapy. The EAP will, in collaboration with NAOs and EWAOs, determine the proportion of the training elements that need to be completed prior to the ECP being awarded.

4.2. The training meets the EAP's criteria for basic professional training, and includes the following elements:

4.2.1. Personal Psychotherapeutic Experience, or equivalent. This should be taken to include training analysis, self-experience, and other methods involving elements of self-reflection, therapy, and personal experience. No single term is agreed by all psychotherapy methods. Any training shall include arrangements to ensure that the trainees can identify and appropriately manage their involvement in and contributions to the processes of the psychotherapies that they practice in accordance with their specific methods.

4.2.2. Theoretical Study

There will be a general part of university or professional training and a part which is specific to psychotherapy. University or professional courses leading to a first University degree or its equivalent professional qualification in subjects relevant to psychotherapy may be allowed as a part of, or the whole of, the general part of psychotherapy theory, but cannot contribute towards the 4 years of specific psychotherapy training. Theoretical study during the 4 years of training specific to psychotherapy should include the following elements:

Theories of human development throughout the life-cycle

An understanding of other psychotherapeutic approaches

A theory of change

An understanding of social and cultural issues in relation to psychotherapy

Theories of psychopathology

Theories of assessment and intervention

4.2.3. Practical Training

This will include sufficient practice under continuous supervision appropriate to the psychotherapeutic modality and will be at least two years in duration.

4.2.4. Placement in a mental health setting, or equivalent professional experience.

The placement must provide adequate experience of psycho-social crisis and of collaboration with other specialists in the mental health field.

4.3. Supervision, training and, where applicable, personal psychotherapy should be provided by practitioners whose training meets the criteria of the ECP. Advanced trainings for trainers and supervisors are not covered by these criteria, but will be required.

5. Completion of Training:

5.1. By the end of the training, the trainee (now a practitioner) will have to have demonstrated personal, social and professional maturity and a commitment to working to a professional code and ethical standards.

5.2. There will be an assessment of both theoretical and practical work.

5.3. The practitioner should have completed required university or equivalent training in human or social sciences and the specialised 4-years of psychotherapy training, within organisations training in the same method of psychotherapy.

5.4. The practitioner must be in a professional organisation which has an ethical code, complaints and disciplinary procedure consistent with and recognised by their NAO and the relevant EWAO.

5.5. The NAOs and EWAOs will determine how Training Organisations finally assess trainees of approved & accredited training programmes.

6. Awarding Procedures:

6.1. The EAP recognises that some aspects of training are confidential and some may be commercially sensitive. Materials used in training may be the intellectual property of the trainers, of the Training Organisation, or of others. Members of the EAP and of the other bodies involved in the award of the ECP have a duty to safeguard the confidentiality and the ownership of such material made available to them under these criteria.

6.2. The ECP will be awarded by the EAP according to these criteria and this procedure:

6.2.1. on the recommendation of the appropriate National Awarding Organisation (NAO);

6.2.2. and with the approval of the appropriate European Wide Accrediting Organisation (EWAO) representing the practitioner's modality of psychotherapy.

6.3. The ECP will be awarded for a period of five years, in the first instance.

6.4. The award of the ECP will proceed in steps as follows:

6.4.1. A suitable organisation will apply to the EAP for recognition as a NAO. (*1.2.3.1)

6.4.2. A suitable organisation will apply to the EAP for recognition as an EWAO in a particular modality. (* 1.3.3.1)

6.4.3. The NAO will submit a dossier to the ETSC on each Training Organisation's programme which it is intended will lead to the award of the ECP. This dossier will specify the training course or programme provided by that organisation and will contain evidence to show that the course(s) and the Training Organisation concerned meet the EAP's criteria for the ECP.

6.4.4. The NAO must ensure that the training programme and the Training Organisation has the accreditation of the relevant EWAO.

6.4.5. Each EWAO must keep a register of practitioners approved by the accredited Training Organisations within that modality.

6.4.6. If the dossier is sufficient, the ETSC will recommend the training programme and the Training Organisation to the Governing Board.

6.4.7. Suitably qualified practitioners who wish to apply for the ECP must submit an application to their NAO. This application will include an outline of their studies, endorsed by the Training Organisation: a photograph, and the fee.

6.4.8. If the NAO considers that the practitioner should be awarded the ECP, It will so recommend to the Registration Committee of the EAP.

6.4.9. The EAP may:

6.4.9.1. award the ECP;

6.4.9.2. reject the recommendation, giving grounds for so doing;

6.4.9.3. request further information, such as the trainee's training dossier.

6.5. For a limited period of time, there will be separate arrangements for the award of the ECP to established practitioners. These are outlined in the "grand-parenting" section (* 9.)

7. Registration:

7.1. The Registration Committee will be responsible for recording the details of practitioners holding the ECP onto the ERP, in a manner which will satisfy the EAP as to its accuracy and accessibility.

7.2. The Registration Committee will publish the ERP, electronically and otherwise, and will make details of entries publically available.

7.3. There will be a procedure for removing the names of practitioners from the ERP on health or disciplinary grounds, for non-payment of fees, or by special application.

7.4. The schedule of fees for the recognition of organisations, for the award of the ECP to practitioners, and for the inclusion of a practitioner's name on the ERP will be determined by the Governing Board of the EAP, and ratified at the Annual General Meeting.

8. Appeals & Complaints Procedures:

8.1. If a NAO refuses to recommend the award of the ECP to practitioners whose training has been within a psychotherapy modality scientifically validated by the EAP and who have otherwise completed all requirements, the EWAO representing that modality can require the EAP to investigate the matter. If the NAO is found to have acted without adequate reason, the EAP may withdraw its status as a NAO.

8.2. If an EWAO does not accredit a Training Organisation which has been recognised by an NAO thus preventing the trainees of that organisation from gaining the ECP. The NAO can require the EAP to investigate the matter. If the EWAO is found to have acted without adequate reason, the EAP may withdraw its status as an EWAO.

8.3. Training Organisations who are members of a NAO whose courses have not been put forward for approval by the NAO can, in the absence of a relevant EWAO, appeal directly to the ETSC who will investigate the matter and may put that organisation's course forward to the Governing Board for approval, if appropriate.

8.4. If an Awarding or Accrediting Organisation (NAO, EWAO) has acted improperly, or has been shown to be at fault, and that this has been clearly established outside of the EAP (as in a Court of Law: an arbitration panel or review body: or by self-admission), then their status as an Awarding/Accrediting Organisation may be reviewed, suspended or removed: appropriate changes may be required to their statutes, ethics, or procedures: or their membership of the EAP may be suspended or withdrawn.

8.5. If a Training Organisation which awards the ECP has acted improperly or has been shown to be at fault, and that this has been clearly established outside of the EAP (as in a Court of Law; an arbitration panel or review body; or by self-admission), the EAP will first require matters to be properly investigated by the relevant NAO or EWAO (where they exist) before deciding upon any further action.

8.6. The suspension or withdrawal of membership of a NAO or an EWAO or the removal of approved status by the NAO or accredited status by the EWAO from a Training Organisation or a training programme will not threaten the status of any practitioner already holding the ECP.

8.7. If a complaint is made against a practitioner holding the ECP, it will be directed to the relevant NAO, and possibly EWAO. They must follow their published complaints procedures and deal with the complaint appropriately. If, as a result of any disciplinary process, the NAO or EWAO suspends or removes the practitioner from their Register, they immediately inform the Registrar of EAP, who will take appropriate action.

9. Grandparenting:

9.1. The introduction of any new professional qualification means that the status of current practitioners needs to be recognised. This is especially important when the qualification is one whose possession could become necessary for professional privileges to be granted, as may happen with the ECP. It may be appropriate to insist that some practitioners demonstrate that they had training which meets the criteria of the ECP, but this would be unreasonable in the case of practitioners who were already recognised as experts in their field but who have acquired most or all of their expertise through professional practice. This is the usual situation in new modalities, or in countries where psychotherapy is in a rapid phase of development. The process of recognising practitioners who have acquired expertise through practice and not necessarily training is known as 'grandparenting'.

9.2. Grandparenting is based on the following principles:

9.2.1. The high standards of the ECP are maintained.

9.2.2. The ECP cannot be awarded to a practitioner unless a recommendation to do so is received from a NAO.

- 9.2.3. The role of the relevant EWAO to monitor training standards within a particular modality is recognised.
- 9.2.4. The different internal arrangements adopted by different NAOs is recognised.
- 9.2.5. Practitioners in countries without NAOs must not be disadvantaged by the procedures for awarding the ECP.
- 9.2.6. The practitioner does not have to submit themselves for examination, nor to undertake further training.
- 9.2.7. The EAP retains the final authority over the award of the ECP.

9.3. The criteria for grandparenting are:

- 9.3.1. A grandparented practitioner has levels of skill equal or greater than to those of a practitioner trained to the standard of the ECP.
- 9.3.2. The practitioner is a member of a professional body, usually a member organisation of their NAO, and adheres to a code of ethics which is compatible with that of the EAP.
- 9.3.3. The practitioner has expertise in a modality of psychotherapy which is recognised by the EAP.
- 9.3.4. The practitioner has been in independent professional practice for a period appropriate to justify grandparenting and which is in accordance with the provision of the NAO for that country.
- 9.3.5. Practitioners who are in training, or who have recently completed a training, will not normally be considered for grandparenting, but may have their training recognised retrospectively.

9.4. The procedures for grandparenting are:

- 9.4.1. An NAO has to have satisfied the EAP that their national procedures for grandparenting have been developed and are acceptable.
- 9.4.2. The practitioner is recommended by their NAO, with the approval of the appropriate EWAO and/or EWO. If there is no specified modality, this approval may be waived by the ETSC on a proposal of the GAP (see * 10.2.2).
- 9.4.3. There is a recorded process whereby the practitioner's theoretical knowledge and skillful practice of a psychotherapeutic method has been considered by the NAO. This may include a peer-review process, such as an interview by peers, or election by peers into a professional society. Any publications demonstrating relevant theoretical knowledge will be taken into account. Length of practice and types of work will be considered.
- 9.4.4. The NAO will submit the names of practitioners for the award of the ECP by grandparenting to the Registration Committee.
- 9.4.5. Each NAO will have three years from the date on which the first name is accepted to complete the submission of all practitioners names to be grandparented from that country. Additional candidates for grandparenting will not normally be accepted by the EAP after that time.
- 9.4.6. NAOs are not expected to submit candidates for grandparenting until all their national procedures are in place, and approved by EAP.
- 9.4.7. Until the procedures for accrediting Training Organizations are agreed by the EAP, an NAO can apply for an extension of its grandparenting procedures to the ETSC.
- 9.4.8. NAO's may propose transitional procedures for granting the ECP, first to NUOC, EWOC, & then to ETSC, for those people trained to ECP standards but who don't fit all grandparenting requirements.

10. Exceptions:

- 10.1. If there is no NAO, no National Umbrella Organisation, or no organisation suitable or willing to act as an NAO, a suitably qualified practitioner may receive the ECP on the recommendation of a NAO in another country so long as the practitioner becomes a member of that latter organisation and so long as that latter organisation is willing to apply the regulations of the ECP to that practitioner.
- 10.2. In the absence of an EWAO, either:
 - 10.2.1. an organisation may be recognised by the EAP to represent the modality concerned, or:
 - 10.2.2. a committee, appointed by the Governing Board, composed of 2 members of the EWOC and 2 members of the NUOC and the chairperson (or deputy) of the Scientific Validation Committee, shall substitute as an EWAO and act as the Grandparenting Advisory Panel (GAP).
- 10.3. In cases of doubt or complication, the EAP may require and will initiate additional independent expert or scientific comment.

10.4. If an EWAO is aware that a NAO is not grandparenting people for that modality in that country then they should ask the NAO to rectify the situation. If the NAO does not do so, the EWAO asks the ETSC to rectify the situation.

10.5. If a NAO is aware that an EWAO is not accrediting people for that modality in that country, then they should ask the EWAO to rectify the situation. If the EWAO does not do so, the NAO asks the ETSC to rectify the situation. If there is no relevant EWAO and/or EWO. the application must be accepted by the EAP's Grandparenting Advisory Panel.

Status:

The original document was largely prepared by Digby Tantam and Emmy van Deurzen, co-Chairs of the ETSC upto 1999, resulting from many meetings of the ETSC and the Governing Board. It was accepted in at the General Meeting of the EAP in Rome, 1997, and revised at the General Meeting of the EAP in Vienna, 1999.

This latest version is largely the product of a Task Force, consisting of Hans Krens, Traudl Szyszkowitz, Marlot Rappard, Isabelle Crespelle, Mony Elkaim and Courtenay Young, mandated by the Board in February 2000, and their document was ammended and then was approved by the ETSC in Paris in Oct 2000. It was then added to (*9.4.2; 9.4.7 & 9.4.8) by the ETSC in Feb 2001 (Vienna) & June 2001 (Moscow) with revisions from the ammended EAP Statutes and the original ECP document (* 1.2.2 & 1.3.2 + 1.4.5) [all in italics]. This version was submitted to the Governing Board of the European Association for Psychotherapy (EAP) in July, 2001 (Moscow) and was accepted by them and their decision was reported to the AGM. This document now replaces all other previous versions.

ETSC : Governing Board : AGM : Moscow : July 2001