



CONCORDIA
UNIVERSITY
OF **EDMONTON**

DIPLOMAS AND CERTIFICATES
IN
PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

Information Booklet

(Updated July 2020)



OVERVIEW OF DIPLOMAS AND CERTIFICATES IN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

Some of the main activities of professional psychologists consist of assessment, diagnosis, and evaluation covering the areas of personality, learning, forensic, and neuropsychological practice. Therefore, psychologists and graduate students need to be up-to-date with the latest testing instruments, and their appropriate use.

At one level, it is important to be able to administer tests efficiently, ethically, and reliably. At the next level, it is important to know enough about testing and diagnostic theory to become a skilled interpreter of results. It is important to make trustworthy and valid interpretations and conclusions for:

- (a) learning recommendations (schools, colleges and universities);
- (b) forensic issues (such as placement of children in foster care due to unsafe environments at home with testimony needed before the courts);
- (c) personality assessments (in military settings to ensure that soldiers are fit to serve);
- (d) neuropsychological settings (to assist individuals recovering from stroke and brain injury).

Many other situations (too numerous to mention here) require good evaluation and interpretive skills in the area of clinical and counselling psychology.

In order to use the information obtained by testing and assessment, an individual needs to be good at writing reports that will be trustworthy and offer valid and helpful observations and suggestions. Thus, students need plenty of practice in writing reports, along with acquired skills and knowledge.

The certificate and diploma programs are set up to provide students with the instruction and practical opportunities they need to become excellent in their abilities to complete psychological assessments, write reports, and make helpful, reliable, and valid suggestions for the individuals or third parties seeking the assessments.

Two of the areas of assessment offered in the diploma and certificate programs, personality and intellectual assessment, provide the basic building blocks that serve as a base for other areas of assessment. Two other specialized areas include: (a) forensic assessment which is used with individuals who are involved with the criminal justice system, for the most part, and (b) neuropsychological assessment which is used with people across the lifespan who may have brain anomalies and behavior problems.



Description of Laddering and Reasons for Similar Course Content for Undergraduate and Graduate Students

The skills required to administer psychological tests are identical for undergraduates and graduates. In fact, registered professional psychologists hire BA-level staff to do much of their test administration as psychological assistants. It is essential for registered professional psychologists to have excellent mastery of the administration and interpretation of psychological assessment and evaluation. The distinguishing features of the graduate courses in assessment are their demand for higher-level interpretations of test results and integrative psychological report-writing. Thus, through the psychological certificates and diplomas, the Concordia psychology department is offering courses that can be taken, if needed, to gain basic and advanced skills as a test administrator, interpreter, and evaluator.

This means that our diplomas and certificates may serve multiple purposes and allow for laddering from one degree to another.

1. Recent BA or BSc graduates might choose to take the courses to enhance their opportunities to be employed as psychological assistants under the supervision of a registered psychologist. Some will take the courses to enhance their possibilities to be accepted into Master's programs.

Sample program (certificate): PSY 631, PSY 634, PSY 635

Sample program (diploma): PSY 631, PSY 605, PSY 636, PSY 637, PSY 634, PSY 635

2. Individuals with a recent Master's degree might be missing depth of experience in intellectual assessment, or personality assessment, or may lack knowledge and skill in a specialty area (forensic or neuropsychological assessment). Thus, they might opt to take a certificate or diploma to obtain the skills and clinical experience necessary to fulfill all the requirements of the College of Alberta (CAP) psychologists to become professionally registered.

Note that while psychologists in Alberta must show proof of an appropriate degree, more importantly, they must have acquired the appropriate course content and practice experience required by CAP. Some Master's programs in counselling psychology in Alberta do not offer the same depth of assessment training that is offered through our diploma and certificate programs.

3. Individuals with a Master's degree or Doctorate, plus a number of years of independent practice experience as professional psychologists, might wish to extend their skill base. Thus, they might enroll in courses in the specialized areas of forensic assessment or neuropsychological assessment.



4. Finally, professional psychologists may take our assessment grad courses just as a way of updating professional knowledge. Thus, they serve a continuing education purpose, too.

Multiple learner pathways are displayed in the image below: Students with Bachelor degrees from other universities might enroll in our diploma and certificate courses prior to entering a graduate degree program.

Students with advanced degrees (MA; PhD; PsyD) might take some specific specialized courses such as neuropsychology and the associated practicum, in order to enhance their skills. At the same time, they may already be registered as psychologists and running an active private practice.

5. Students with Bachelor degrees from CUE might come back for practicum courses prior to applying to graduate programs. Graduates of Concordia's applied emphasis psychology undergraduate program may obtain **course equivalency** in 300 or 400-level courses that are considered to be highly equivalent to parallel 600-level courses. Specifically, the following courses, many of which are pre-requisites to the practicum courses, will be considered equivalent:

305 * 605	431 * 631
311 * 611	433 * 636
333 * 633	434 * 634
421 * 621	452 * 652
422 * 622	477 * 677

Note: Courses can only be applied to one degree. Thus, students cannot get credit for the undergraduate equivalents to grad courses in the PsyA program because they have already obtained credit for those courses in the undergraduate program. However, they can request **course equivalency** consideration in those prerequisite courses that will allow them to register directly in the practicum courses. (Example: If students have taken 431(equivalent to 631) and 434 (equivalent to 634), they **will be granted advanced standing** and allowed to register in the 635 practicum).

- Benefits for CUE 4-year grads: In many cases, this means you may be able to take just the practicum courses. (Almost all CUE grads will have taken 305 and 431, thus you will already have taken 6 credits from the B group of courses, allowing you to enter just the practicum courses (all A group courses). However, some CUE BA grads may choose to take other courses, in addition to the practicum courses, simply to learn more about a particular content area at an advanced level.
- You need a **3.0 overall GPA to enter the program.**
In **each undergrad course** that is to be considered a grad course equivalent you need to have a minimum mark of **B (3.0).**



Program Requirements for Psychology Certificates & Diplomas

Certificate 9 credits: = 3 courses

Diploma 18 credits: = 6 courses

Note: Each course = 3 credits

A--GROUP OF COURSES 6 credits from the following for Certificates (Diploma requires 12 cr.)	B-- GROUP OF COURSES 3 credits from the following for Certificates (Diploma requires 6 cr.)	GRAD/Undergrad near equivalents
634 Intellectual Skills/Theory	605 Ethics	(634/434) & (605/305)
636 Personality Skills/Theory	611 Quantitative Methods	(433/636) & (611/311)
652 Forensic Skills/Theory	621 Qualitative Research 622 Qualitative Applied Research	(652/452) & (621/421) (622/422)
677 Neuro Skills/Theory	631 Psychometrics	(677/477) & (631/431)
659 Child Psychopathology 669 Adult Psychopathology	633 Group Counselling	(633/333)

A--Group of courses continued	
635 Intellectual Practicum	
637 Personality Practicum	
653 Forensic Practicum	
678 Neuropsychology Practicum	

Pre-requisites are required for all practicum courses: Be sure to plan your courses carefully, taking into account the pre-requisites. In general, students should take Psy 631 in the fall semester since it is a pre-requisite to many other courses.

Small university limitations: Cohorts of Psychological Assessment students are quite small as is the university (fewer professors relative to large public universities). This means we are obliged to restrict the number of sections of courses that can be offered each year. We will try to offer all the courses every year. However, many courses will be offered only once per year. For example, Psy 633 (Group Counselling) will usually be offered only in the fall semester. On the other hand, if supervisors are available, we will offer all the practicum courses every semester.



Note: No Maximum number of courses set:

It is also possible to take as many of the courses offered as desired. A student could take more than the required 6 courses, for example, to enhance possibilities of getting into graduate school. Alternatively, a student could take just one course out of interest (but would need to register as a special student).

Format of classes:

All courses require attendance in classes at Concordia or a practicum setting. There may be some courses with a hybrid format, meaning some parts of the course are online and some parts require in-class attendance. However, there are no strictly online courses

Admission Requirements

For both programs: Graduate Diploma or Graduate Certificate in Psychological Assessment

A. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

To be considered for admission, post-BA students (including those with graduate degrees) who are not registered psychologists must be prepared to present the following minimum requirements:

1. A four-year Bachelor degree from a recognized educational institution, preferably in psychology. Note: Students with a 4-year degree in a related field may be admissible but may be required to take qualifying courses.
2. A 3.0 GPA including the last 60 credits taken, as indicated by an official transcript.
3. A security clearance that includes: (a) a criminal record check, and (b) a vulnerable sector check.
4. An academic/employment CV with a statement of career objectives.
5. Applicants who have completed their most recent degree in a language other than English require an overall score of 98, and the following minimum scores, on each component of the TOEFL-iBT: 27 in Speaking, 25 in Writing, 23 in Listening, and 23 in Reading.

Registered psychologists will be required to provide:

1. Proof of registration in good standing with the College of Alberta Psychologists or equivalent licensing body for psychologists.
2. A 3.0 GPA including the last 60 credits taken, as indicated by an official transcript.
3. A security clearance that includes: (a) a criminal record check, and (b) a vulnerable sector check.



4. An academic/employment CV with a statement of career objectives.
5. Applicants who have completed their most recent degree in a language other than English require an overall score of 98, and the following minimum scores, on each component of the TOEFL-iBT: 27 in Speaking, 25 in Writing, 23 in Listening, and 23 in Reading.

B. DIPLOMA PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

1. **18 credits (6 COURSES)** required, to include:
 - a) **12 credits** chosen from PSY 634, 635, 636, 637, 652, 653, 659, 669, 677, or 678
 - b) **6 credits** chosen from PSY 605, 611, 621, 622, 631, or 633

C. Achieve a minimum overall GPA of 3.0 in the required courses. CERTIFICATE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

1. **9 credits (3 COURSES)** required, to include:
 - a) **6 credits** chosen from PSY 634, 635, 636, 637, 652, 653, 659, 669, 677, or 678
 - b) **3 credits** chosen from PSY 605, 611, 621, 631, 622, or 633
2. Achieve a minimum overall GPA of 3.0 in the required courses.

D. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Students graduate on one of three degree-conferral dates following successful completion of their program requirements. For further information about graduation requirements, see Graduation and Convocation details in the academic calendar.

NEW REQUIREMENT!!

Note that all students admitted into the Psychological Assessment program must take a brief ethics course now required of all graduate students at CUE. This course is entitled, ***FGS 600-Graduate Ethics Training Course***. Normally, students complete this brief course in their first term. The non-credit course focuses on a number of academic integrity and ethical issues at the graduate level, including, but not limited to, intellectual property issues, conflicts of interest, integrity and scholarship, graduate student-supervisor relations, and conflict resolution. Any graduate student who does not complete the requirements of this course on a satisfactory basis will not be permitted to graduate from his or her respective graduate program.

Note: Restricted to students enrolled in the programs of the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

Instruction Hours: 8 hours in total.

NOTA BENE: Once you plan to register for any of the practicum courses, please notify Dr. Hanson at bill.hanson@concordia.ab.ca immediately so that she can identify an appropriate supervisor to match your needs.



Detailed Course Descriptions – Psychological Assessment

The Certificate requires 9 credits and the Diploma requires 18 credits selected from the following groups of courses:

(A) Group of Courses (Select 6 credits for the certificate and 12 credits for the diploma)

PSY 634 - Advanced Intellectual Assessment - 3 (0-3L-0)

This course will provide advanced theoretical knowledge in the area of intellectual assessment, covering the historical development, major theories of intelligence and intellectual assessment including the administration, scoring, interpretation and report writing for both child and adult intellectual batteries. The course will be a combination of class lectures, demonstrations of testing and scoring procedures, in-class observation of students administering intellectual tests to each other, case study presentations, after-class participation in test administration and scoring exercises. The course will provide foundational knowledge for the subsequent practicum placement in intellectual assessment (PSY 635).

Prerequisites: PSY 431 (Theory and Practice of Psychometrics I) or PSY 631 (Theory and Practice of Psychometrics)

PSY 635 - Advanced Intellectual Assessment Practicum - 3 (4-0-0)

This course will consist of a practicum placement with a Registered Psychologist, under whose field supervision the student will practice the administration of intellectual test batteries in an applied setting and be responsible for developing interpretation and report writing skills. This practicum provides an excellent foundation in intellectual assessment. Further training and supervision would be necessary for the student to be able to conduct independent intellectual assessment as a registered psychologist.

Note: Enrolment may be limited by availability of approved practicum placement sites.

Prerequisites: PSY 434 (Intellectual Assessment) or PSY 634 (Intellectual Assessment Practicum) and Consent of Department

PSY 636 - Advanced Personality Assessment - 3 (1.5-0-1.5)

This course will provide advanced theoretical knowledge and techniques in the area of personality assessment. It will involve a combination of lectures, administration and scoring procedures for various personality inventories. It will provide foundational knowledge for the subsequent practicum placement in personality assessment (PSY 637).

Prerequisites: PSY 431 (Theory and Practice of Psychometrics I) or PSY 631 (Theory and Practice of Psychometrics)



PSY 637 - Advanced Personality Assessment Practicum - 3 (4-0-0)

The purpose of this course is to build upon knowledge gained in either PSY 433 or PSY 636 or equivalent course. Student will be placed in a practicum where they will be supervised by a Registered Psychologist while completing personality assessments. This practicum provides an excellent foundation in personality assessment. Further training and supervision would be necessary for the student to be able to conduct independent personality assessment as a registered psychologist.

Note: Enrolment may be limited by availability of approved practicum placement sites.

Prerequisites: PSY 433 (Personality Assessment) or PSY 636 (Advanced Personality Assessment) and Consent of Department

PSY 652 - Advanced Forensic Assessment - 3 (0-3L-0)

This course will provide advanced theoretical knowledge in the area of forensic psychological assessment, covering the major theories of criminal behavior including administering, scoring, interpreting, and report writing. Students will learn about specialized risk assessment instruments and how assessment results can inform and direct intervention. The course will be a combination of class lectures, demonstrations of testing and scoring procedures of various risk assessment instruments, and interpretation and report writing discussions and exercises. This course will provide foundational knowledge for the subsequent practicum placement in forensic psychological assessment (PSY 653).

Prerequisites: PSY 431 (Theory and Practice of Psychometrics I) or PSY 631 (Theory and Practice of Psychometrics)

PSY 653 - Advanced Forensic Assessment Practicum - 3 (4-0-0)

The purpose of this course is to build upon knowledge gained in either PSY 452 or PSY 652. Students will be placed in a practicum where they will be supervised by a Registered Psychologist while completing forensic assessments. This practicum provides an excellent foundation in forensic assessment. Further training and supervision would be necessary for the student to be able to conduct independent forensic assessment as a registered psychologist.

Note: Enrolment may be limited by availability of approved practicum placement sites.

Prerequisites: PSY 452 (Forensic Psychological Assessment) or PSY 652 (Advanced Forensic Assessment) and Consent of Department

PSY 659 - Child and Adolescent Psychopathology, Diagnosis and Complex Case Conceptualization - 3 (1.5-1.5s-0)

This course will offer a comprehensive overview of child and adolescent emotional and behavioral disturbances. Topics will include: models of psychopathology, discussion of disorders affecting children and adolescents, comorbid diagnoses, and complex case conceptualization.



PSY 669 - Adult Psychopathology, Diagnosis and Complex Case Conceptualization - 3 (1.5-1.5L-0)

This course will focus on the more commonly occurring mental disorders among adults. Emphasis will be on DSM-V diagnosis supplemented by alternative models of psychopathology. Students will have an opportunity to present and discuss atypical and complex clinical cases.

Note: This course also requires 1.5 hours per week of online work.

PSY 677 - Advanced Human Neuropsychology - 3 (0-3L-0)

Students will develop an in-depth understanding of the basics of neuroanatomy and neuropathology critical for understanding the mechanisms and consequences of brain injury and neurological diseases. In addition, they will become familiar with the strengths and weaknesses of the two most commonly used neuropsychological batteries.

Prerequisites: PSY 275 (Brain and Behavior)

PSY 678 - Advanced Human Neuropsychology Practicum - 3 (8-0-0)

Students will become familiar with the strengths and weaknesses of the two most commonly used neuropsychological batteries and have the opportunity to work under the direct supervision of a neuropsychologist in learning to administer, score, interpret and write clinical consultation reports for neuropsychological evaluations. This practicum provides an excellent foundation in neuropsychological assessment. Further training and supervision would be necessary for the student to be able to conduct independent neuropsychological assessment as a registered psychologist.

Note: Enrolment may be limited by availability of approved practicum placement sites.

Prerequisites: PSY 635 (Advanced Intellectual Assessment Practicum) and (PSY 477 (Human Neuropsychology) or PSY 677 (Human Neuropsychology Practicum)) and Consent of Department



(B) Group of Courses (Select 3 credits for the certificate and 6 credits for the diploma)

PSY 605 - Ethical and Professional Issues in Psychological Practice - 3 (0-0-3)

Students will develop an in-depth understanding of ethical issues and professional standards in counselling and clinical psychology. Students will learn how to identify and resolve ethical issues relevant to the practice of counselling and clinical psychology, following the Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists of the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) and the College of Alberta Psychologists (CAP) Guidelines and Standards in the professional practice of psychology.

PSY 611 - Quantitative Data Analysis - 3 (3-1s-0)

This course covers statistical methods used to summarize and make inferences from quantitative data. Inferential statistics include: chi-square, t-test, ANOVA, ANCOVA, correlation, regression and multiple regression.

PSY 621 - Qualitative Research Methods and Critical Analysis - 3 (0-0-3)

This course will introduce students to the rationale for using qualitative research methods in psychology and related disciplines. Clear guidance will be provided on how to carry out basic qualitative research in psychology, including projects employing grounded theory, interpretative phenomenology, case studies, discourse analysis, and participatory action research. Ambitious students in this course will obtain the background and opportunity to produce an article using one or several qualitative research methods. This article could be suitable for publication. The methods lend themselves to counselling, clinical, and educational inquiries in field settings.

PSY 622 - Qualitative Research in Applied Settings - 3 (0-1.5s-0)

This is an independent study course that will allow the students to gain experience in conducting supervised research in clinical, counselling, or applied settings in the community. This is an advanced course that follows completion of PSY 621 or PSY 421 in which students will have completed a survey of qualitative research and submitted a research proposal for REB approval. Students will meet individually with their supervisors, collectively with their lab group classmates, and work on their own projects, for a minimum of 3 hours per week, on an ongoing basis while completing their research projects in applied settings.

Prerequisites: PSY 421 (Qualitative Research Methods and Critical Analysis) or PSY 621 (Qualitative Research Methods and Critical Analysis)



PSY 631 - Theory and Practice of Psychometrics - 3 (0-1.5s-1.5)

A critical appraisal of assessment techniques used for clinical counselling and classification purposes. Topics include reliability, validity, and utility of testing.

PSY 633 - Group Counselling - 3 (0-3s-0)

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the theory and practice of group counselling, and to provide hands-on experience in the group process. It stimulates thought about ethical and practical issues that are typically encountered by group leaders and participants. Students will have the opportunity to apply their theoretical learning in the context of an experiential teaching group.

Credit Restriction: Credit may be obtained for only one of PSY 633 (Group Counselling) or PSY 630 (Group Counselling)

