



**Federation of Psychotherapists &
Counsellors of Queensland Inc**

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www.fpcq.asn.au

Policy & Membership Application Document

For ease of writing and space in this document, the term “therapist” refers only to counsellors and psychotherapists. FPCQ does not discriminate between therapists from psychological, social work, welfare or other similar backgrounds with regard to membership criteria.

Providing the Endorsement of Your Counselling Skills that Your Profession and Clients Require ...

Federation of Psychotherapists and Counsellors of Queensland Inc (“FPCQ”) is a not for profit association, run by an annually and democratically elected management board. FPCQ has been representing counsellors in Queensland since its incorporation in May 2003. FPCQ has become the largest independent professional body for therapists in Queensland which contributes to the community, raises the profile of mental health in Queensland and promotes high professional standards for the profession.

FPCQ fulfils crucial roles within the framework of the profession, including accountability to the public and clients. FPCQ adheres to an internal policy of communicating with members and providing its members with:

- · affordable Ongoing Professional Development
- · affordable Professional Supervision
- · networking
- · collegiality

FPCQ registration means that you will practise under a uniform and clearly-defined Code of Conduct. This Code of Conduct clearly establishes your level of professionalism and good character with clients, employer groups, the general public and your colleagues. It reflects your willingness to demonstrate to the public and employer groups a strong desire to be accountable. Registration is one of the best forms of quality control employers and the public can rely on.

FPCQ’s Mission

To be recognised by the profession, public and government agencies, medical institutions and health service providers as a professional counselling association providing services, benefits and registration standards to counsellors and psychotherapists throughout Queensland.

FPCQ’s Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of FPCQ are to:

- · be a body to provide for registration of therapists in Queensland
- · provide a unified voice for the profession.
- · provide a high quality and best practise Code of Ethics and Practitioner Standards
- · promote the professional development and growth of practising therapists
- · maintain a register of qualified practising therapists to raise awareness of Queensland therapists
- · maintain a register of FPCQ members who are Professionally Registered Supervisors
- • identify to the public at large therapists who meet approved standards of practice
- • help the public at large to become more aware of the counselling profession and the availability of reputable therapists
- • promote research in the counselling profession

FPCQ Chapters

FPCQ operates in one of the largest states of Australia and ensures that therapists throughout Queensland are not disadvantaged because of distance and geographic location. Provision exists for chapters throughout the state. Please refer to the website for chapter locations and meeting details. It is important members in regional and country areas have a vehicle from which they can be heard and supported. FPCQ’s commitment to chapters is to support them wherever possible .

Role

All members are asked to join their local chapter, as they are an excellent networking venue. By joining and becoming pro-active, you ensure FPCQ members are recognised at the highest levels of private and government organisations. Attendance at chapter meetings attracts double points in relation to Ongoing Professional Development and Supervision, making chapter attendance a cost effective way of attaining OPD and professional supervision.

Chapters do not operate independently from FPCQ and have no power in regards to making changes to the constitution, policies or procedures. Chapters must not make representations to local or state government bodies or representatives without first seeking formal permission from the FPCQ executive.

Chapters cannot run Annual General Meetings (“AGMs”); however, members may elect local members to positions such as President. This should, whenever possible, be at an FPCQ AGM.

Costs

Chapters are not to accumulate any monies and cannot apply separately from the parent body for funding or grants. Chapters collect money from members and participants of meetings to cover immediate venue and catering costs for any chapter meetings. Receipts of all expenditures are kept and sent to the Treasurer and all incoming monies are formally recorded and receipted. A formal record of all incoming and outgoing monies is kept and an updated statement is sent to the Treasurer on a monthly basis. All money related issues in regards recording and administration procedures are cleared with the Treasurer prior to any events. All projects run by chapters are co-ordinated with the

Management Committee. Chapters have no authority to act on behalf of the FPCQ, commit to programs / projects, monies / grants, make public statements, hear complaints or represent FPCQ without first seeking formal written permission from the Management Committee.

Meeting Format

Chapter meetings are run in accordance with FPCQ's meeting policies. Each meeting has an agenda, which is sent to members no later than 5 working days prior to the meeting. The meeting is run by the Chairperson (or designated substitute) and accurate minutes are kept. Meetings are run on a professional basis, to the FPCQ meeting rules as follows:

1. The Chairperson opens the meeting and welcomes members and guests.
2. The Secretary reads the minutes of the previous meeting and any outstanding business is discussed.
3. A motion is made to accept the minutes as being accurate.
4. If appropriate, the Treasurer reads their report, with copies available to members.
5. A motion is made to accept the Treasurer's Report.
6. The Chairperson reports on any other relevant issues.
7. Any new business is discussed.
8. The meeting is closed and the date and time for the next meeting proposed.
9. The meeting is followed by any organised activities.
10. Members' log books are signed off for OPD and, if relevant, supervision, by the Chairperson or their designated representative.
11. Copies of the minutes are sent to the FPCQ Secretary and the Treasurer's Report to the FPCQ Treasurer.

Monetary Gains

No members are to be paid for presentations or acting as a supervisor at meetings. Meetings are not to be used as a recruiting ground for training providers or members' businesses, nor are they to be used to push the agendas of a training provider or political organisation.

Members are to declare openly, and it is to be minuted, any projects, programs, training, services or other business mentioned at meetings that would lead to income, kickbacks or any other form of remuneration, whether it be money, services or goods, into a business they own, work for or have an affiliation with. Time before and after a meeting is not to be used to offer services or otherwise by a member to generate income of any sort unless it is agreed upon by members prior to the activity and cleared with the FPCQ Management Committee.

Supervision

Chapter meetings that include professional supervision are to identify who the supervisor/s are, what level of ACA membership they hold and what responsibilities they have to the group. Supervisors are to volunteer their time and are not to be paid. Pre-prepared fictional scenarios should be used for supervision. Sessions are not to be used for individual supervision.

If it becomes clear at any time during a supervision session that a member is breaching any of the FPCQ codes of conduct, the meeting chairperson is to document the event and refer to the chapter committee for further action.

Members are under no obligation to undertake any directions given by a supervisor at meetings or to agree with any outcomes or conclusions drawn by the supervisor. Members who are challenged in any way at a chapter meeting that includes supervision should clarify their issues with their own supervisor in the first instance.

Research

FPCQ is aware of the importance of research and development for the advancement of counselling. To this end, FPCQ has been involved in several projects that also involve data collection and research activities. Members are encouraged to participate in such projects whenever possible.

Membership Information

FPCQ acts as a registration body for counsellors and therefore is primarily an individual membership body. FPCQ accepts individual applications from counsellors and psychotherapists. Social workers, psychologists, GP's nurses, hypnotherapists, educators, guidance officers, mental health nurses etc may apply for membership if they meet eligibility criteria. FPCQ embraces professionals from other disciplines that have therapy in common and is an inclusive association. However, FPCQ is, first and foremost, primarily a body for counsellors and psychotherapists. FPCQ's rationale for existence is that all therapists who have completed the appropriate training should have access to membership of a professional body at the full level.

There are three categories of membership:

- 1 **Full membership** is open to therapists who are members of the Australian Counselling Association (ACA) and have completed an ACA approved course of study at the minimum level of a diploma in counselling / psychotherapy.

Full members, regardless of whether they are paid or not, must complete a minimum of 10 hours of professional supervision and 25 points of Ongoing Professional Development per membership year. This must be documented and documentary proof submitted with renewals (see "Requirements for Membership Renewals" below).

Full members are authorised to use the initials **MFPCQ** after their name.

Full members who go on a sabbatical, retire, take up full time study or stop practising therapy for any other reason for more than 3 months are eligible to apply for **non practicing** (“NP”) status. NP applicants have to give FPCQ a written assurance that they will not practise professional counselling whilst under this category. Membership applicants may apply for entry at this level. NP members are not required to complete supervision or OPD requirements whilst classified under this category. However they are required to renew their membership annually. Members wishing to convert back to practising member status will be required to contact the FPCQ and discuss the necessary steps. They must ensure they do not give the impression they are practising members through verbal, written or electronic means. An NP categorised member who practises therapy, whether it be paid or unpaid, is in contravention of the FPCQ Code of Conduct and liable to disciplinary action.

2 Student (non-full) membership is open to students who are currently completing their first ACA approved course of study in counselling / psychotherapy.

Student members are not required to meet OPD or supervision requirements outside of their recognised course commitments.

3 Associate (non-full) membership is open to anyone who is not a qualified therapist but is an approved volunteer working on a FPCQ project. Non-full members are welcome to participate in all meetings and discussions. However, these members may not vote or propose amendments to rules, policy or standards.

Non-full members are **not permitted** to use the initials MFPCQ under any circumstance. This is a breach of the FPCQ Code of Conduct and will attract disciplinary action. All non-full and non-practising members, except students where indicated, would be breaching the FPCQ Code of Conduct to practise formal or informal counselling / psychotherapy regardless of whether they are paid or not, or to give the impression they are a full practising member of FPCQ.

Membership Certificates

Membership certificates are issued when a member first joins FPCQ and when a member changes their category of membership, for example, from student member to full member. Certificates are only valid for a period of five years and new certificates are issued accordingly. Full members are encouraged to display their certificate prominently for the benefit of clients and peers.

Requirements for Membership Renewals

Log Books

Membership renewal notices are posted to members approximately 2 weeks after the annual renewal date of June 30. To avoid duplication ACA Log books are used to record members’ supervision and Ongoing Professional Development (“OPD”). It is the member’s responsibility to record, and have the appropriate person/s sign off, all supervision and OPD they have undertaken.

Members are required to submit **photocopies** of ACA log books to FPCQ showing documentary evidence that they have accumulated the necessary points required for membership renewal. Members may attach photocopies of certificates of attendance, receipts, transcripts etc to their log book that they would use for ACA if they are not sure of how many points each activity attracts.

Supervision

It is a **mandatory** requirement of membership that all current practicing full members of FPCQ complete at least 10 hours of Professional Supervision per membership year. The supervisor must be registered by ACA, or a body approved by ACA, at the same or higher level than the supervisee. FPCQ recommends the minimum amount of supervision is one hour for every 20 hours of client contact time.

Members have several supervision options:

- 1** Professional supervision is undertaken with a **registered supervisor**, either face to face or by telephone. The **supervisor** signs off the member’s log book.
- 2** Group supervision is undertaken with a group leader who is a registered supervisor, in a face to face format. The group leader signs off the member’s log book.
- 3** Peer supervision is undertaken with at least one registered supervisor present. The supervisor signs off the member’s ACA log book. FPCQ will not accept claims of peer supervision from members who attend meetings that do not have a recognised FPCQ group facilitator. Members are limited to **two hours** of peer supervision per membership year.

Members who do not complete the prescribed hours of supervision due to exceptional personal issues may apply to FPCQ for exemptions. Each case will be considered individually and on its merits.

Ongoing Professional Development (OPD)

It is a **mandatory** requirement of FPCQ membership that all current practicing full members accumulate at least 25 OPD points per membership year. OPD points are acquired by attending any of the following; workshops, seminars, meetings, conferences or further training courses that are appropriate to counselling and psychotherapy.

One hour of OPD equals one OPD point. **Double points** are available for attendance at FPCQ chapter meetings, workshops and conferences, to encourage members to attend local meetings as well as offering a cost-effective venue by which to accumulate points.

Members who do not complete the prescribed hours of OPD due to exceptional personal issues may apply to FPCQ for exemptions. Each case will be considered individually and on its merits. FPCQ recognises that it may be difficult for members in some regional and isolated areas to accumulate the necessary OPD points. These members may also make a claim of extenuating circumstances to FPCQ. Each case will be considered individually and on its merits.

Members who wish to claim points for research and writing workshops, books, seminars and presentations may apply separately for information about points allocation.

Professional supervision hours may be used to make up OPD points if a member has more hours than is required. In this case, one hour of supervision is equivalent to one OPD point.

Post Nominals – MFPCQ

Post nominals indicate to the public that not only does the member meet professional standards but that they are accountable to a professional body with a path of recourse for the public. Members should display their post nominals with integrity and humility. Post nominals are not a sign of elitism but a sign that an individual is prepared to be professionally examined by a peer body in order to prove competence. This is one of the highest forms of commitment an individual can make to their profession and the public.

Financially current full members are authorised to use the post nominal MFPCQ after their name to reflect membership to FPCQ. Student, associate and un-renewed members are not authorised to use this post nominal. To do so is to be in breach of the FPCQ Code of Conduct and FPCQ will take legal action against them. Breaches of this policy may also attract public attention through recourse action taken by FPCQ.

Professional Supervisors

FPCQ does not register supervisors. FPCQ only recognises supervisors who are registered with their relevant professional body as supervisors and/or approved by ACA.



Membership Application Form

1 Personal Details

Given Name Family Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ State Post Code: _____

Phone (day) _____ (evening) _____ (mobile) _____

Email: _____

Date of Birth ____/____/____ Gender: M / F / T ACA Membership Number: _____

ACA Membership Level: _____

2 If you are applying for Full Membership ...

Which relevant academic qualifications do you hold? Please attach certified copies of qualifications.

Supervisor's Name: _____ Supervisor's Phone: _____

Supervisor's Qualifications & Supervision Number:

Please include a written statement from your supervisor stating the number of hours of professional supervision you have undertaken in the past year.

Referee: _____ Referee's Phone: _____

Note: Referee can be a peer, colleague or another professional. This person must not be your supervisor.

Please include a written statement from your referee regarding your standing within the community.

Although not essential, other supporting documents such as a CV, letters from previous employers, job descriptions, etc, will also help to establish your eligibility.

Are you currently practicing counselling? Yes / No

Are you a Registered Supervisor? Yes / No

If you are a Registered Supervisor please provide relevant Supervision Number: _____

Do you have professional indemnity insurance cover? Yes / No

Provider: _____

If not, we are unable to refer clients to you, via the phone or FPCQ website.

3 If you are applying for Student Membership ...

Course: _____

Educational Institution: _____

4 If you are applying for Associate Membership ...

Which FPCQ project are you working on? _____

5 Conduct (all applicants to complete)

A “yes” answer to any of the following will not necessarily preclude you from membership. If you answer “no” to any of the following and it is found at a latter date you have misled FPCQ your membership will be cancelled immediately.

- a) Are there any complaints of professional misconduct currently under investigation in relation to your current or past work? Yes / No
- b) Are you aware of any formal complaints of professional misconduct having been made to any professional association or registration board against you at any time? Yes / No
- c) Have you ever been refused entry to a professional association or a registration board because of reports of professional misconduct? Yes / No
- d) Have you ever been dismissed from a professional organisation or registration board because of reports of professional misconduct? Yes / No
- e) Do you have a criminal record? Yes / No
- f) Are you currently under investigation by State, Territory or Federal Police? Yes / No

Please provide further information if you have answered “yes” to any of the above.

6 Membership Agreement

I, _____, agree to abide by the objectives, Code of Conduct, disciplinary code and regulations of the Federation of Psychotherapists and Counsellors of Queensland Inc (FPCQ). I also give my permission for an authorised representative of FPCQ to contact my supervisor or any other person whom I have nominated to support this application, for verification purposes. I also swear that the information provided in this application is accurate and true at the date of signing.

I, _____, agree that should I be applying for membership as a student or associate member that I will not offer or accept work regardless of being paid or not as a counsellor, nor will I give the impression that I am a practising counsellor*.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

*Practising counsellor – a counsellor who has recognised qualifications as a counsellor and who accepts payment of any kind for a service as a counsellor. This does not include volunteer non paid work.

7 Payment Details

I am applying for (please tick):

- Full practising membership (please write ACA membership No _____) \$60.00 incl GST
- Full non practising membership (please ACA membership No _____) \$60.00 incl GST
- Student membership (please ACA membership No _____) \$30.00 incl GST
- Associate membership \$10.00 incl GST

I enclose my cheque / money order made out to FPCQ for \$ _____ OR

Please debit my credit card to the value of: \$ _____ . MasterCard Visa Bankcard

Credit card number _____ Expiry date: ____/____

Name of cardholder _____ Signature of cardholder _____

8 Check list

Full membership:

- Copies of your qualifications, certified (by a Justice of the Peace), are attached.
- An original letter from your supervisor stating the amount of hours of supervision you have received in the last year is attached.
- A letter from your referee is attached.

Student membership:

- A copy of your enrolment letter or receipt for payment of the course is attached.

9 Application Submission

Please return application to: FPCQ Memberships
PO Box 160
Grange QLD 4051

Further information: phone 0404 436 183
email secretary@fpcq.asn.au