



society

Society approved to award EuroPsy

Ingrid Lunt (Chair, European Awarding Committee) and Peter Banister (Chair, National Awarding Committee)

The Society has been approved by the European Federation of Psychologists' Associations (EFPA) to award the EuroPsy Certificate to suitably qualified UK psychologists who meet the EuroPsy criteria.

EFPA is a federation of now 35 psychological associations that represent about 300,000 psychologists across Europe, both applied and academic psychologists. One of its goals is the integration of practice with research and the promotion of an integrated discipline of psychology. At its General Assembly in London in 2001, EFPA Member Associations agreed a European framework for the psychology curriculum. This was supplemented in 2005 when the General Assembly agreed the specification for the EuroPsy Certificate.

The European Certificate in Psychology or 'EuroPsy', launched for implementation early in 2010, provides a standard or benchmark that aims to ensure the high quality of education and training in psychology. This standard supplements national standards and does not replace them. The goal is to create a system where the public is able to check the qualifications of a psychologist, or to find the name of a suitably qualified psychologist in a particular country.

There are now 12 countries that have been approved, with a further 10 in the pipeline.

Approval signifies that the country (its psychological association) has a National Awarding Committee (which evaluates applications for EuroPsy), and that procedures are in place to ensure that applicants meet the European minimum standard of six years of education and training (often delivered through a 3+2+1 model of three years bachelor, two years master's, plus one year of supervised practice). Approved EuroPsy psychologists are entered on the European Register, and are required to revalidate the Certificate every seven years.

The Society's requirements for Chartered status (sometimes gained through a 3+3 model, three years bachelor followed by three years doctorate which includes supervised practice) meet the EuroPsy standard. The Society proposes to make eligibility for membership of the Society and/or registration with the HPC the requisites for applying for EuroPsy to ensure that the award through the Society is quality-assured by committing applicants to abide by our member conduct rules and Code of Ethics and/or the HPC's requirements for registration.

In time EuroPsy may become used to help 'Competent Authorities' in each country to evaluate equivalence of qualifications and hence facilitate mobility. The European Commission is currently working on a revision of its qualifications directive, which aims to facilitate and promote mobility for professionals across European

borders. It has carried out an evaluation to see how far the current system works in practice, and how far it facilitates mobility. One idea under consideration is that of a Professional Card which would be issued by the Competent Authority; here the EuroPsy might be used as the standard for a European Professional Card for psychologists. Within the Commission there continues to be a tension between quality standards and mobility: consumer protection requires quality standards, while mobility is facilitated by lower standards, or a lowest common denominator.

Society involvement in EuroPsy and approval of its procedures is welcomed within EFPA. Much of the development work for EuroPsy has been strongly influenced by the UK model, including its strong emphasis on competences as an integral part of supervised practice. Involvement with EuroPsy is also important for UK psychologists and psychology. Although the UK may currently be a net 'importer' of psychologists trained in another country and who wish to move to the

UK, this situation may gradually change. Faced with higher tuition fees, numbers of UK students are choosing to study in other countries. The Bologna process and programmes such as Erasmus and Erasmus Mundus are increasing the numbers of UK students who are able to take parts of their degree in another country. Many of the countries in Europe that

have more demanding requirements for professional qualification are facing pressures from governments to recognise practitioners qualified with a lower level of psychological education. EFPA provides a powerful forum for discussion and debate and increasingly for representation at EU level, as shown by the first 'Psychology for Europe' conference, which takes place at the European Parliament on 9 November 2011.

Following EFPA's approval, the Society is putting in place the application process for EuroPsy and developing a EuroPsy website. We are on track to start receiving applications during the first quarter of 2012.

A number of members successfully applied for EuroPsy during the pilot phase that ran between 2007 and 2009. These members will be automatically transferred to the Register of EuroPsy Psychologists without the need to make a further application.

For post-pilot phase applicants, there will be both a transitional and a regular route to achieving EuroPsy and detailed information about the criteria and process for each will be published on the website as soon as the EuroPsy pages are live.

In the meantime, if you are a Chartered Psychologist and/or registered with the HPC and would like to express an interest in applying, or find out more about the EuroPsy award, please contact Janet Vaughan (janet.vaughan@bps.org.uk) or Alex Minshall (alex.minshall@bps.org.uk) in the Society's Membership Team.

EuroPsy
European Certificate in Psychology