Guidelines for NUS undergraduate Psychology major students undertaking external clinical work

Note: Clinical work is defined as any work that is undertaken directly with clients, such as assessment, behavioural observation or support, interviewing or discussing with clients or/and their family members, and any forms of intervention.

1. Code of Ethics

Since you will be undertaking a Psychology-related internship/practicum, you are strongly encouraged to be familiar with and abide by the Singapore Psychology’s Code of Ethics\(^1\) which articulates the professional conduct of Psychologists practicing in Singapore.

2. Work Plan

You are strongly encouraged to develop a work plan about what you would like to achieve and learn during your internship/practicum and this should be discussed with your on-site supervisor (preferably, before you formally commence your work).

3. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

As soon as you commence your internship/practicum, be familiar with the SOPs for emergencies at the site, for example, what to do in the event of a fire or when a client becomes aggressive or absconds, etc.

4. Supervision

The general understanding in the community is that one must have a minimum of Masters in a sub-discipline of Psychology (e.g., clinical, educational, developmental, counselling, organizational, social, etc.) in order to practice as a Psychologist. There is a Singapore Register of Psychologists (SRP)\(^2\) registry which bears the names of Psychologists who are eligible to practice in Singapore. Note that this list is not exhaustive and may not include the names of all practicing Psychologists as it is not compulsory to be a Registered Psychologist with SRP in order to practice in Singapore.

You are encouraged to seek a supervisor (internal or external) who is a Registered Psychologist with SRP or is eligible for SRP registration, if your on-site clinical supervisor does not fall in one of these two categories.

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\(^1\) https://singaporepsychologicalsociety.org/singapore-register-of-psychologists/

\(^2\) https://singaporepsychologicalsociety.org/srp-membership-directory/

Note:
The above guidelines do not entail the endorsement of any internship/practicum by the Department of Psychology, NUS.
5. **Self-Introduction**

- Introduce yourself in all correspondence with clients, their families and other stakeholders as “NUS student on internship/practicum” and **NOT** as “Psychologist or Therapist or Counsellor”.
- Indicate the duration of your internship/practicum.
- Provide your supervisor’s name.

For example: “Hi, my name is Jane. I am a NUS Psychology student in my second year and am on internship here at Pandora Clinic. I will be attached here for two months. My supervisor is Mr Gerard Paul”.

6. **Direct Clinical Work**

- Ensure that you practice within your areas of competence. For example, if you have not been trained or are not being supervised to do Applied Behaviour Analysis, you should **NOT** engage in such work.
- Avoid being in a 1-1 situation with clients and their family members.
- Ensure that you have preliminary understanding of the clients that you work with, such as, their presenting problems, medical problems, and formulation.

7. **Documentation**

Obtain relevant templates from supervisor for the following:
- Documenting client sessions.
- If handing over clients.
- If corresponding with clients, their families and other stakeholders via email.

8. **Confidentiality**

- No identifying information should be taken out of the site or conveyed to individuals who are not part of the practice.
- When discussing your client with work colleagues, this should be done with a clear purpose rather than for the purpose of simply sharing information. Such sharing should also be done in a private setting.

9. **Contract of Service**

Obtain a Contract of Service from your employment. For more information, refer to the CfG document³


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10. Contact

If you have any questions or feedback about your internship/practicum, please contact Mark Tan from the Dean’s Office at mark.tan@nus.edu.sg.

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