



## **Australian National Register of Counsellors**

*For the purpose of this document the term counsellor is interchangeable with the term psychotherapist*

The ACA National Register of Counsellors is a public document that contains a list of over 1,000 counsellors throughout Australia who have signed an agreement to meet the National guidelines implemented by ACA. These counsellors have chosen to seek registration with ACA, and in the process, be audited by ACA as to their eligibility for placement on the Register. This list is updated on a monthly basis.

The ACA National Register of Counsellors is the largest register for counsellors in Australia. Entry onto this register requires the highest stringent standards be met in the Counselling profession. Entry onto the Register requires each counsellor to apply individually to ACA and is not available to any counsellor unless their supporting documents are first checked and sighted by an authorised ACA staff member. These guidelines are consistent with and in many cases higher than other similar peak professional bodies in Asia, UK, New Zealand and America. All ACA registered counsellors have agreed to:

- Meet ACA Professional Supervision requirements
- Meet ACA Ongoing Professional Development requirements
- Abide by the ACA Code of Conduct/Ethics
- Adhere to the outcomes of the ACA Complaints Board
- Meet mandatory annual renewal requirements
- Abide by the ACA Complaints Procedures
- Be accountable to the Australian public through the ACA
- Supply documentary evidence to support membership requirements
- Meet the National Register eligibility requirements
- Have their names placed on the National Register

Any member of the public who wishes to verify the registration of a counsellor or seek further information can ring the ACA National Office on 1300 784 333 between the hours of 8am and 4pm Monday to Friday, except for public holidays.

### **Frequently asked questions**

#### **What is required for a counsellor to be placed on the Register?**

All Registered Counsellors must individually complete a membership application form and supply supporting documents to ACA before being considered eligible for registration. ACA holds an electronic and paper file on each registered counsellor to meet auditing requirements. ACA is able to meet third tier auditing processes to establish the validity of its registered counsellors. Counsellors will not meet registration requirements on the single basis of having membership to another professional body. Only counsellors whose qualifications and eligibility criteria that have been established through the sighting of supporting documents supplied to ACA are placed on the National Register. Only full financial members of the ACA are eligible for registration on this register.

#### **Why is a National register necessary?**

The only way a member of the public can be assured that their practitioner is accountable is through registration. Members of the public who seek counselling services to overcome emotional and mental health issues need to be assured that the counsellor they are seeking these services from is accountable and indeed qualified to be offering such a service.

Counsellors are not required by law to meet any mandatory or national standards of training or registration. Therefore, a person may claim to be a counsellor without any appropriate training. Such people are more likely to make your condition worse or even use a client's vulnerability to meet their own agenda without being accountable. The only way the public can protect themselves against poor practices is through seeking services from registered professionals. There may also be times when a client may not be happy with the service they have received from a counsellor. If the counsellor is not registered then avenues of redress are limited, if any exist at all. However, if the counsellor is registered, a formal complaint can be made to the Complaints Board of ACA. Outcomes of a complaint can lead to deregistration, which has significant overlapping consequences over and above being deregistered.

### **Who can register as a counsellor?**

Only a professional counsellor who has met ACA full member requirements (this information can be found on the following link) <http://www.theaca.net.au/docs/ACA%20Policies,%20Application%20and%20Information%20Booklet%20February%2008.pdf> is eligible to register.

### **How can a member of the Public make a Complaint?**

The ACA Complaints Procedure document can be found on the following link [http://www.theaca.net.au/docs/ACA\\_Complaints\\_Procedures.pdf](http://www.theaca.net.au/docs/ACA_Complaints_Procedures.pdf) . All formal complaints need to be made in writing.

### **What is the ACA Code of Conduct?**

The ACA Code of Conduct can be found on the following link [http://www.theaca.net.au/docs/code\\_conduct.pdf](http://www.theaca.net.au/docs/code_conduct.pdf)

### **Why would a counsellor not be eligible for registration on the ACA register?**

There are several reasons for this:

- They may not have completed an approved course of training
- May have been de-registered due to a previous complaint
- Unable to meet mandatory annual renewal requirements
- They do not meet the standards implemented by ACA to practice
- Do not meet the requirements of ACA to register as a counsellor

### **What if a counsellor's name is not found on the ACA Register?**

Only full members of ACA are eligible for registration. Therefore if a counsellor's name is not on the ACA Register then this indicates they may either:

- Not be eligible for Registration with ACA
- May have been de-registered
- May have sought registration with another organisation

*To view the ACA National Register of Counsellors, please click on the following link:*

[http://www.theaca.net.au/docs/National\\_Register.pdf](http://www.theaca.net.au/docs/National_Register.pdf)