



AUSTRALIAN
COUNSELLING
ASSOCIATION Inc

PO Box 88 Grange QLD 4051 Ph: 1300 784 333 www.aca.asn.au

ACA your peak representative body, ensuring your future interests are being looked after

Thank you for your interest in joining the Australian Counselling Association, Australia's largest individual registration body for counsellors and psychotherapists.

ACA is a vibrant, progressive and proactive association that is about representation at the National, State and local levels. We are about increasing employment potential for counsellors and raising the profile of the benefits of counselling for the Australian public. We have a proven track record of increasing employment opportunities for our members through our advocacy programs with major employment groups. ACA has consistently led the pack in relation to Supervisor training standards, accreditation of higher education and vocational training courses and developing pathways for members to undertake cost effective Professional Development training. If you are interested in not just registration standards but also in being a part of the most dynamic association in mental health in Australia you have come to the right web site. There are no hidden extra costs such as capitation fees, administration fees, registration fees etc. There is only one membership fee which covers all registration fees.

Why Should I Join ACA & What are the Professional Advantages?

Let's not beat about the bush, this is a fair question. It's your hard earned money so you deserve an honest and clear response. Over and above the expected; credibility, representation, standards, accountability through a national complaints mechanism etc, ACA offers members many added benefits as follows.

Three Registers to raise your profile:

ACA will at no further cost raise your profile by automatically adding your registration details to three nationally recognised search engines:

1. ACA Find a Counsellor search facility, found on the ACA home page
2. Australian Register of Counsellors and Psychotherapists, combined National register
3. Mind Your Head, a public information portal



You don't have to do a thing, ACA will add your information once your membership application has been successfully processed.

Your own Profile Web Page:

Each new full member is allocated their **own web profile page**, fundamentally your own web page. You can use the URL that comes with your profile for marketing or for your CV. There are no hosting costs and if you link it to a Hotmail or Gmail email address you have essentially a full IT package at no extra cost and even better no ongoing admin costs you can update the information on your profile page anytime. It is your page. Once you join, ACA will send information on how to get your profile up and running. For a preview of a profile page go to <http://www.theaca.net.au/counsellor/philip-armstrong>

Customised Insurance:

ACA has negotiated a customised insurance policy specifically for counsellors/psychotherapists. Most associations simply carry a generic policy that is designed as an umbrella policy for allied health and alternative health practitioners, many of which have few standards. Counsellors require a policy that is specifically developed for mental health professionals and respects the standards required to be a registered professional. So ACA has negotiated a customised policy with Focus <http://www.focusinsurance.com.au/association-programs/australian-counselling-association> that is only available to ACA members. And yes it is also the cheapest policy on the market for registered professionals. The reason it is cheap is because only ACA registered professionals can access it therefore risk is mitigated for the underwriters. Even better every policy that an ACA member takes out with Focus, Focus will give ACA \$20 of the fee. That way you are giving back to ACA without it costing you a cent. This is one way we are able to keep membership fees down.

Member Logo:



You can proudly display your registration and membership to ACA with a professionally designed logo. The logo can be used as part of your signature group on your email, placed on marketing material and can be used on your business card and web site. This logo reflects professionalism and importantly for the public registration and “accountability”.

Access to full time Professional Staff:

This is one area in which ACA has a lot of pride, having well trained professional staff on hand to respond to your queries. Our National office is staffed from 8am to 4pm Monday to Friday, barring public holidays. ACA staff work hard to ensure emails are responded to in the next working day, not days or weeks, and phone calls are answered immediately, no answering machines during normal business hours. And to ensure you do not end up paying exorbitant STD costs we have a toll free 1300 number so you can ring us anywhere from within Australia at the cost of a local call. Membership application forms are processed within 2 working days or if we have a query about your application you will receive an email or phone call from one of our Membership Officers within 2 working days. Another bonus for members is that ACA’s (your) profile remains professional due to ACA having full time professional staff when meeting with other professionals, business people or government. If your representatives are volunteers and can only attend meetings around their usual work schedule what message is this sending about your representative body. This is hardly the perception you would want of your representative body. All ACA staff wear an ACA uniform so anyone they meet with knows where they are from and your representatives are well presented at all times.

Representation:

ACA representatives continually meet with Federal, State and local government officials to ensure that counselling is understood and supported at all levels. ACA has as its priority a lobbying effort to have counselling services made rebateable against Medicare. We are also lobbying for recognition of counselling services within the Department of Veterans Affairs, WorkCover within each state (ACA has been successful in NSW) and many other government departments. ACA is constantly sought for information and advice from Senate committees, Coroners, Health Complaints Commissioners and State and Federal government departments. ACA is a full member of the Mental Health Council of Australia.

International Representation:

ACA has a long rich history of working with counselling and psychotherapy associations outside of Australia. ACA’s presence is very strong in Asia with ACA being a founding member of the Asia Pacific Rim Confederation of Counsellors (APRCC). The 4th APRCC conference will be held in partnership with ACA in Perth 2015. Unfortunately due to the significant differences in education from country to country qualifications are not easily transportable. Membership to ACA will facilitate movement between countries where we have a working relationship with peak bodies. ACA is an Honorary Association member of the

British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists and have a working relationship with the following associations:

- American Counseling Association
- Philippines Guidance and Counselling Association
- Association of Psychotherapists and Counsellors (Singapore)
- New Zealand Association of Counselling
- Asian Professional Counselling Association
- Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association
- Kenya Counselling and Psychology Association
- Indonesian Counselling Association

Counselling Australia Journal:



Counselling Australia is Australia’s premiere journal for counsellors and psychotherapists with a rich 12 year publishing history. **Counselling Australia** informs professionals with the latest research and industry news, also serving as a platform for peer reviewed articles. **Counselling Australia** is an easy to read journal with a magazine style layout. Whilst being informative for professionals, it provides advertisers the ideal vehicle to inform readers of products, services and training opportunities within the industry.

ACA members who subscribe to **Counselling Australia** automatically receive 6 OPD points per membership year. There is a small annual subscription fee of \$60.

Education/Qualifications:

As a peak body, ACA is depended upon for consultation within the Vocational and Higher Education sectors in relation to the design of counselling/psychotherapy qualifications. ACA has input on the following groups: Industry Reference Group within CSHISC, Subject Matter Expert Group, Curriculum Development boards and External Review Committees within several Universities and Registered Training Organisations. It is through this process that ACA is able to determine which courses and qualifications will meet membership requirements

ACA Shop:



To help members raise the profile of counselling we have invested in some commercial products which members can access through the ACA online shop

<http://www.theaca.net.au/shop/>. These products are available at a low cost and all have a practical use as well as that of raising the profile of counsellors. Our “Keep calm and see a counsellor” bumper sticker is a great way to raise the profile of counselling and usually raises a smile at the same time. Our T Shirts say it clearly and are available in men’s and women’s sizes. We also have baseball caps, computer satchels and other interesting articles including a variety of brochures.

Conferences:

ACA holds annual conferences each year. Members receive significant discounts to these conferences plus other special discounts such as accommodation. ACA conferences are rotated around Australia with some conferences being internationally partnered such as the 2015 Asia Pacific Rim conference being held in Perth.

ACA Full Member & Registration Application Form

Please carefully go through each step in this application in sequence.

Incomplete applications will be returned to the sender and this may cause unnecessary delays.

This application form should only be filled out once you have read and understood all the relevant documents and policies such as the ACA Code of Ethics, Supervision Policy, Suicidal Clients Guidelines, etc which can be found on <http://www.theaca.net.au/documents.php>

Step One

Qualification Definitions

The following information will help you to understand how ACA defines Australian qualifications and therefore where your qualification sits in relation to membership.

Diploma/Adv Diploma = An ACA accredited counselling course (or equivalent if completed prior to 1 July 2010) as per the ACA Accreditation Standards document delivered by a **Registered Training Organisation** or equivalent if completed pre 1 July 2010.

Associate Degree = 2 year degree in counselling delivered by a registered Higher Education provider.

Degree = 3 year or 4 year ACA approved/listed (or equivalent if completed prior to 1 July 2010) Bachelors or a 2 year full time Masters Degree that has a pre-requisite of being underpinned by a counselling qualification/experience delivered by a registered Higher Education Provider. *A graduate Certificate and/or Graduate Diploma are not degrees and therefore are not assessed as being adequate as a stand-alone qualification for level 3 or 4.*

Post Graduate = ACA accredited (or equivalent if completed prior to 1 July 2010) Graduate Diploma, Vocational Graduate Certificate/Diploma delivered by a registered Higher Education provider and/or Registered Training Organisation that has been approved to deliver higher education and /or vocational training and has been accredited with ACA.

Note: Graduate Certificate as a standalone qualification will not meet the requirements of entry standards.

PhD are not recognised on their own as a qualification.

Applicants who have graduated from a relevant training course since 1st of July 2010 will need to have completed an ACA recognised course of study before being eligible for membership. Applicants who have completed a non ACA recognised Diploma course after 1st of July 2010 may sit an examination to demonstrate eligibility for membership to ACA. Further information is available on this subject on request.

Applicants who graduated from a relevant training course prior to 30th of June 2010 will need to have completed an appropriate counselling qualification that meets ACA pre 2010 ACA training standards. If you completed a relevant degree **pre 2000** then it will be assessed on an individual basis. If you are unsure as to whether your qualification meets these requirements you can send in your transcript of training for assessment prior to completing an application.

Overseas qualifications will be assessed individually however they must be accompanied with a certified transcript of training, employment history and supervisor reports.

Step 2

Categories of Membership

Now you have determined where your qualification sits you need to determine whether you wish to be registered and if so as a practicing or non - practicing member. The following discusses each of these categories and their implications.

Registered: A registered member is a member who has had their name entered on the ACA National Register and has been allocated a personal identifier registration number. Practicing and non practicing members can be registered. Registration reflects accountability to ACA, the public, peers, and government as well as to the profession as a whole. Registration is perceived by the public as a necessary pre-requisite to practice. Although not legally required to practice the public assumes this is the case.

- **Non - Registered:** A non registered member is a member who has not met the criteria for registration and therefore is not permitted under the ACA banner to practice counselling in any form unless as part of a supervised formal training requirement or internship. Generally these will be student members.
- **Practicing member:** This category is for those who wish to be registered and will be engaged in delivering formal counselling as part of your employment (paid or unpaid) and/or as a private practitioner.
- **Non - Practicing:** This category is for those who wish to be registered however, will not be practicing formal counselling as part of their employment or be engaged in private practice. This category is primarily for those counsellors whose primary employment within the counselling industry is teaching, lecturing, tutoring or research but not actual practice.

Step 3

Registered Practicing & Non-practicing Membership

Once you have determined whether you wish to be a registered practicing or non practicing member you will need to determine at which level you are eligible to apply for. *If you are applying for membership as a non registered member go directly to step 4.*

Registered Practicing levels: These levels are only open to applicants who are actively practicing and come with an annual professional development (OPD) requirement of 25 points per membership year and 10 hours of clinical/professional supervision per membership year. The following criteria must be read in conjunction with the above

Counsellor Level 1 \$200

- Has graduated from an ACA Accredited Course or equivalent at the Diploma, Advanced Diploma or Associate Degree or a Bachelor degree with a major in counselling; have completed less than 50 hours of Professional Supervision and have less than 2 years post qualification practice.

Counsellor Level 2 \$220

- Has graduated from an ACA accredited course or equivalent at the Diploma/Advanced Diploma or Associate Degree Level and
 - o has a minimum of 2 years post qualification supervised practice; or
 - o Completed 1 years post qualification supervised practice and completed a Vocational/post Graduate qualification in Counselling; and has completed a minimum of 50-hours Professional/Clinical Supervision.
- OR,
- Has graduated from an ACA recognised course of study at minimum Bachelor Degree Level.

Counsellor Level 3 \$240

- Has graduated from an ACA Accredited Course of study at minimum Degree Level.
- Has 3-years post qualification supervised counselling experience, including a minimum 750 client contact hours.
- Has completed a minimum of 75 hours of post qualification Professional/Clinical Supervision
- Requires a statutory declaration declaring client contact hours

Counsellor Level 4 \$260

- Has graduated from an ACA Accredited Counselling Course of study at minimum Degree Level.
- Has 6-years post qualification supervised counselling experience, including a minimum 1,000 client post qualification contact hours.
- Has completed a minimum of 100 hours of post qualification Professional/Clinical Supervision
- Requires a statutory declaration declaring client contact hours

The following examples can be used once you have familiarised yourself with the requirements for each level.

Examples:

- You graduated with an ACA recognised Diploma, Advanced Diploma, Associate Degree or a Bachelor's degree with a major in counselling less than two years ago and have not accumulated a minimum of 50 hours of post qualification supervision; you are eligible for membership at level 1.
- You have completed a Diploma or Advanced Diploma of Counselling and have one year of post qualification supervised practice and have also completed a Vocational or HE Graduate Diploma and have accumulated 50 hours of professional supervision since completing your Diploma. You are eligible for level 2.
- You hold a Graduate Diploma of Counselling and no other ACA approved qualification; you are eligible for level 1. If after completing your qualification you have completed 50 or more hours of documented supervision then you are eligible for level 2.
- You hold a Graduate Diploma of Counselling and also a relevant Bachelor's degree eg Psychology, Social Work, Behavioural Science that has been recognised previously for employment as a counsellor, you have been employed as a counsellor with supervision for over 5 years and have over 750 hours of client contact and 75 hours of supervision; then you are eligible for membership at level 3.
- You hold a Bachelor/Masters **of Counselling** which was completed less than 3 years ago; then you are eligible for membership at level 2.
- You completed an ACA approved degree (bachelor/masters) more than 3 years ago and have accumulated more than 75 hours of documented supervision and over 750 hours of client contact; then you are eligible for level 3.
- You have just completed your Masters in Counselling and also hold a degree in another discipline such as Social Work, Behavioural Science or Psychology; then you are eligible for level 2.
- You hold a Bachelor of Counselling and have over 750 hours of client contact and 75 hours of documented supervision; you are eligible for level 3.
- You have recently completed a Bachelors/ Master's degree in Counselling and this is your first counselling qualification, as opposed to psychology, social work or behavioural science

for instance, but have been practicing/employed as a supervised counsellor for at least 5 years and wish to have your previous practice acknowledged. Contact the Membership Officer for a separate assessment.

- You completed a Graduate Diploma in Counselling and then went on to complete a Masters degree which required you to undertake supervised practice. You accumulated 20 hours of supervision during this time. Is the supervision you completed acceptable to ACA as post qualification supervision. Yes as the Grad Diploma would be considered as your initial qualification any supervision completed after this would be counted.
- You completed a Diploma of Counselling in 2004 and then went on to complete a Bachelor of Counselling in 2008. You have been practicing as a counsellor since 2004, does the client contact time and supervision count as of 2004 or 2008. We count your first ACA approved course of training as the point when client contact time and supervision start from and as the Diploma was an ACA approved course of study at the time 2004 would be your start date for client contact time and supervision.
- You hold no ACA approved qualifications however have been employed and/or practiced as a supervised counsellor for more than 10 years; then apply on a separate application under the grandparent parent clause.
- You completed a Bachelor's Degree prior to 2000 which is not in counselling however you believe it is relevant to counselling and you have been employed as a counsellor. Contact the membership Officer for a separate assessment.
- You have completed a qualification in counselling however it is not an ACA approved course of study. Contact the Membership Officer for a separate assessment.

Non-Practising Registered categories (NP): ACA has two non-practising categories for registered members these are; Proficient and Academic. NP members who practice counselling in any form whilst registered under this category will be open to disciplinary action. NP members are not required to complete annual supervision or OPD requirements. All NP members must use the post nominal MACA (NP) to indicate non practicing status. NP status must be held for a minimum of 12 months before being eligible to change to Practising.

Academic members are generally employed as lecturers within the higher education sector or researchers who hold a relevant PhD or ACA approved Masters Degree but do not practice counselling.

Academic \$250.00

Please attach a certified (by JP) copy of your qualification and transcript and a letter from your employer stating you are employed as a lecturer.

Proficient members hold an ACA approved qualification and are either:

- employed as lecturers, tutors or involved with research within the Vocational or Higher Education sector and hold a minimum of a Diploma qualification, or
- Registered members who are not practicing due to being on a hiatus from their usual employment or occupation

Proficient \$200.00

Please attach a certified (by JP) copy of your qualification and transcript of training and an employment contract outlining your usual employment. If you are on hiatus please attach a letter outlining your situation.

Australian Register of Counsellors and Psychotherapist (ARCAP) ACA is a signatory and full member of ARCAP. All current full members of ACA; level 1 to 4, proficient, academic, are eligible to be listed on ARCAP. ACA does not charge any fees to enter members onto ARCAP.



MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION FORM

P.O Box 88 Grange Qld 4051 Ph: 1300 784 333

All applicants to fill in this page

Personal Details:

Name: _____

D.O.B ___ / ___ / ___ Male/ Female _____

Residential address: _____

Suburb: _____ State: _____ Post Code: _____

Postal address: _____ State: _____ Post Code: _____

Phone number: B/H () _____ A/H () _____

Mobile: _____

Email address: _____

Are you currently practising professional Counselling? Yes / No

Membership Details

Your Occupation: _____

Current Employer: _____

Part A

Practising Full Registration only (Tick category) – If applying for non-practising please go to Part B

Level 4 \$260.00 Level 3 \$240.00 Level 2 \$220.00 Level 1 \$200.00

Please attach the following documents to support your level of application:

- a. Certified (by a Justice of Peace) copy of your relevant qualification/s and full transcripts of training;
- b. A statutory declaration stating how many client contact hours post qualification you have attained and in what period of time (level 3 & 4 only)
- c. An original letter from your supervisor/s if registering as a level 2, 3 or 4 counsellor stating
 - How many hours of post qualification supervision you have completed.
 - How many hours of client contact time you have achieved (for level 3 & 4 only) and in what period of time.

This application cannot be processed without the above-attached documents

Applicants Supervisor/s Details:

Name of Supervisor: _____ Supervisor's Ph: () _____

Supervisors Qualifications _____

How many hours of professional supervision have you received, post qualification? _____

Note: An original letter from your supervisor must accompany this application stating how many hours of professional supervision you have received and how many hours of client contact time you have had since completing your counsellor training.

Name of Referee: _____ Referee's Ph: () _____

NB: Referee can be a peer, colleague or another professional; this person must not be your supervisor or relative by marriage or birth or someone or with whom you have a close personal relationship with. Please also include a written statement from the above 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.

Do you have professional indemnity insurance cover? **Yes / No.**

If yes, please attach your current Certificate of Currency (Insurance Certificate) to this application.

Insurance provider: _____

Entry onto ARCAP: All full members are eligible for entry onto ARCAP, there are no admin fees connected with this:

I wish to have my details entered onto the ARCAP register

Part B

Non-Practising Registration only (Tick category)

Proficient \$200.00

Please attach a certified (by JP) copy of your qualification/s and transcript/s. This application cannot be processed without it.

Academic \$250.00

Please attach a certified (by JP) copy of your qualification and transcript and a letter from your employer stating you are employed as a lecturer. This application cannot be processed without it.

Non-Registered Member (Tick category)

Student \$100.00

Please attach a copy of your acceptance letter or any other document that identifies you as a student with your training provider.

Part C

All applicants must complete the following questions

Conduct: The term counsellor in Part C refers to anyone who has practiced counselling as part of their current or past positions as: psychotherapist/social worker/ psychologist/psychiatrist/medical practitioner/allied health worker/mental health worker/case worker or any other position where counselling skills were required.

A “**yes**” answer to any of the following will not necessarily preclude you from registration/membership. If you answer “**no**” to any of the following and it is found at a latter date you have mislead ACA you will be deregistered immediately. Please circle either **yes** or **no** to each question to indicate your situation. All information will be kept confidential. Please supply full details of any question where you have circled “**yes**”.

1. Are there any complaints of professional misconduct currently under investigation or concluded in relation to your current or past positions as a counsellor? **Yes / No**
2. Are you aware of any formal complaints made against you in regard to your practice as a counsellor or any other previous profession to any Professional Association, registration board or a government authority such as a Health Rights Commissioner at any time, regardless of them being actioned or the outcome? **Yes / No**
3. Have you ever been refused entry/admission to a Professional Association or a registration board because of reports of professional misconduct? **Yes / No**
4. Have you ever been dismissed/deregistered/remanded or had action bought against you from a Professional/peak body, association or registration board due to a complaint made against you? **Yes / No**
5. Have you been convicted of a criminal offence that involved a gaol sentence, white-collar crime, assault, drugs, Children or sexual offences? **Yes / No**
6. Are you currently under investigation by a Government Commission, State, Territory or Federal Police? **Yes / No**
7. Have you ever had an application to work with Children refused? **Yes / No**

If you answered ‘Yes’ to any of the above question please attach a statement outlining the details including any findings, court outcomes and/or penalties.

Part D

All applicants to fill in Membership Agreement and have their signature witnessed:

I, (print name) _____, agree to:

- a. abide by the Objectives, policies, Code of Conduct, Confidentiality Charter, Rules of Membership, disciplinary code and regulations of the Australian Counselling Association Inc (ACA),
- b. to never denigrate ACA, its staff, representatives, members or corporate sponsors,
- c. give my permission if I indicated on this application for my name to be placed on the ACA National Register that is accessible to the public,
- d. receive the electronic ACA Ezine including limited blasts from corporate sponsors,
- e. my details to be placed on the Find a Counsellors web page (if applicable), and
- f. any authorised representative of ACA to contact my supervisor or any other person whom I have nominated to support this application, for verification purposes.
- g. I also give permission for the details contained in this form to be entered into the ACA database and web based referral systems. All clients gained through this service will be informed of their rights in relation to the ACA complaints procedure.

I also swear that the information provided in this application is accurate and true at the date of signing and I have read and understand the Membership Policies and Procedures document.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Witness to your signature to print name: _____

Witness signature: _____ Date: _____

Please Note: Your commitment to ACA when you join is to fulfil annual mandatory requirements. Your registration will not be renewed and your name will be removed from the referral list if you do not attach your completed log book or download the required information through your “member’s profile” page showing you have met your annual requirements when your renewal is due. Your renewal notice will be automatically sent to you 6 weeks before your renewal is due.

Only Applicants applying for Non-Practising category to fill in the following:

I, _____, agree that should I be applying for registration as a non-practising member or for a change of category to a Non Practising 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 current registered practising counsellor.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Witness to your signature to print name: _____

Witness signature: _____ Date: _____

Part E

Check the below list before returning this application, ensure you have attached all relevant documents: Incomplete applications cannot be processed and will be returned.

- 1. Attach Certified by JP Copies of qualifications and transcript of training.
- 2. Attach an original letter from your supervisor that states the amount of supervision hours you have received and client contact hours.
- 3. Attach a letter from a referee (a referee cannot be someone with whom you have a personal relationship or are related to by marriage or birth)
- 4. Have you signed the membership agreement?
- 5. Attach a statutory declaration that is relevant to the State or Territory you currently live in if applying for membership at level 2, 3 or 4 including the following statement

“Do solemnly and sincerely declare that all statements made by me in this ACA Membership Application, are true and correct in every particular, and that all qualifications, client contact hours and supervision quoted therein, and all other documents attached to this ACA Membership Application are capable of independent verification”.

Part F

Payment Details (cross out if not applicable)

Registration/Membership fees \$
Journal subscription \$ **60.00** (optional)

TOTAL \$ _____

I enclose my cheque/money order for \$ _____ or Please debit my credit card to the value \$ _____

(MasterCard) (Visa)

Credit Card Number: _____ / _____ / _____ / _____

Expiry Date: ____ / ____ 3 digit security number _____

Name of cardholder: _____

Signature of cardholder: _____

Return application to: ACA, PO BOX 88, GRANGE, QLD 4051