**UK Counseling Psychology PhD Program: Course Waiver Protocol (Revised 8-19-22)**

1. Incoming post-master’s PhD students who hope to waive courses that, if not waived, would otherwise need to be taken their first fall semester in the PhD program (the Director of Doctoral Training or the student’s advisor can give guidance on this), need to work with their advisor to seek course waivers soon after accepting an offer of admission to the PhD program in the Spring semester prior to matriculation. This is because most new students register for fall courses in the prior April, before available seats in that class fill up. University policy allows incoming domestic students to register for courses in late April prior to their matriculation, and allows incoming international students to register for courses at earliest 30 days prior to the fall semester start date.
2. For courses the student wishes to waive that are not needed to be taken during the first fall semester of the PhD program, the course waiver planning discussion with their advisor can occur in September of their first fall semester. Registration for Spring semester occurs in October and the PhD Program of Study needs to be approved in the Spring semester, so decisions about waivers should be made early in the first fall semester.
3. The first step is for students to **get copies of the most recent syllabus of all required UK courses listed on the PhD Program of Study**. The Director of Doctoral Training can provide new students with access to these syllabi upon request. Students should study the syllabi for required UK courses to see which of their old graduate-level courses may be equivalent (see criteria below) to required UK courses.
4. **Students will then fill out Table 1 and Table 2** at the bottom of this Protocol document to help determine potential equivalencies.
5. **Here is guidance on determining whether you can waive a required UK course by establishing the equivalency of prior courses:**
   * The prior courses you are using for the waiver must be a graduate-level courses. Undergraduate courses cannot count (this is an APA Accreditation requirement).
   * The prior course must have **>90% topical content overlap** with the UK course you are seeking to waive.
   * Students cannot use the same 1 prior course to waive two UK courses.
   * Students can use 1 or more prior courses to waive a UK course, provided the student can show how X portion of prior course A and Y portion of prior course B, when combined together, collectively cover >90% of the topical content of the one UK course.
     + This is not uncommon, as there are topics such as statistics/research methods that different universities tend to package differently; for example, some universities may have statistics and research methods taught in separate courses, whereas other universities may have a course sequence where some statistics and some research methods is taught in each course in the sequence.
   * Students must provide appropriate written documentation as proof that the prior course covers >90% of the topical content of the one UK course. Here is guidance on what constitutes “appropriate written documentation.”
     + The best form of documentation is the prior course’s syllabus, provided that the syllabus provides the (1) topics covered during each weekly course seminar, (2) descriptions of required assignments/assessments, and (3) required readings.
       - Please note that APA Accreditation requires that UK required courses assigned readings include original scholarly source material, specifically peer-reviewed journal articles. Thus, make sure prior courses you are using for a waiver assigned original scholarly source materials as some of the course required readings.
       - When a prior course syllabus lacks #1, #2, or #3, additional course documentation must be provided that articulates this missing information (e.g., course reading list, assignment instructions).
       - When a student’s prior course instructor did not provide a syllabus (this is common in certain countries), the student must obtain or create appropriate written documentation that summarizes #1-3 for that course.
         * Obtaining material can sometimes be achieved by contacting past classmates, the past course instructor, or the past/current faculty program director for that prior department.
         * When *creating* documentation, this documentation must be signed off on by an appropriate faculty representative from the prior program (the prior course’s instructor of record, past/current faculty program director).
     + When appropriate written documentation is not available, the required UK course cannot be waived. We are required to have written documentation, as having a paper trail is important for maintaining APA accreditation. Furthermore, if a student wishes to get licensed as a psychologist in the USA and many other countries, the student may need to provide copies of syllabi to the state psychology licensing board at the time of application. See Table 2 below for more.
   * If a prior course came close to covering >90% of the topical content, but some key topical content was missing from the prior course, the student may have the opportunity to do a “bridge the gap” assignment (see below). However, this suggestion *must* come from the instructor of record rather than the adviser, since the instructor of record is the content expert and would be the one evaluating the “bridge the gap” assignment for sufficiency (unless the instructor of record delegates this responsibility to the advisor with the advisor’s consent).
6. **Students should present the completed Tables 1 and 2 to their faculty advisor** **along with the copies of the appropriate written documentation**.
   * The documentation file for a given course should be renamed to “Waiver Documentation for EDP XXX” prior to sending it to the advisor.
   * When the documentation for a given course is more than just a prior syllabus, the documentation for a given course should be combined into a single PDF. The documentation should be easy to read and navigate, and extraneous information can be deleted as necessary.
7. **Advisor gives initial impressions** about what prior courses *may* be sufficient to justify waivers of required UK courses. Advisor may ask student to make **revisions** (e.g., revise the Tables, reformat provided prior course documentation, obtain additional documentation).
8. **For those courses that the advisor believes would be eligible for waivers, the Advisor tells student which UK instructor of record the student should email** for each UK course the student is seeking to waive.
   * If the instructor of record is a faculty member outside of EDP or a part-time instructor (adjunct), the Counseling Psychology Faculty retain discretion about how to proceed. The Director of Doctoral Training is always available for consultation on this.
   * The advisor does not yet sign the Course Waiver Form at this stage.
9. **Student emails each identified UK instructor of record**. Here is a sample email template:
   * *Subject*: “Course Waiver Request for EDP XXX”
   * *Body*: “Hello Dr. X, I am a new counseling psychology PhD student. I consulted with (name of faculty advisor) regarding the potential appropriateness of seeking a waiver for EDP XXX. They indicated that you are/were recently an instructor of record for this course and suggested that I provide you with documentation regarding my prior graduate coursework that establishes the grounds for potentially seeking a waiver of EDP XXX. Their initial review of this documentation suggested that my prior coursework may be sufficient to justify a waiver of EDP XXX. If your review of the attached documentation suggests that my prior coursework is roughly equivalent to the topical content of EDP XXX, I would appreciate it if you could add your signature to the Instructor of Record signature line at the bottom of the attached Course Waiver Form, at your convenience. Thank you, Student Name.”
   * *Be sure to attach the semi-completed Course Waiver Form and the relevant prior coursework documentation.*
10. **Instructor of record gives opinion** regarding whether prior course is equivalent to the UK course. Instructor of record may respond in one of three ways:
    * No, it is not equivalent, student must take the UK course.
    * Yes, it is equivalent, so student can waive the UK course. In this case, the instructor of record should sign the form and send it back to the student.
    * No, it’s not equivalent, but here is how the student could “bridge the gap” by completing this assignment (e.g., test, paper, project) that, if completed satisfactorily, will demonstrate that the student has gained competence in all relevant knowledge/skill covered by the UK course, and thus can have the UK course waived.
      + If it’s a “bridge the gap” situation, the instructor of record will need to articulate **what** is missing and **how** the gap could be filled through a supplemental assignment. The instructor of record must also be willing to **evaluate** the assignment (deem it satisfactory vs. unsatisfactory), unless they delegate this to the advisor with the advisor’s consent. The instructor of record is under no obligation to offer the “bridge the gap” option; this is completely at their discretion, given the extra burden this places on the faculty member.
      + Once the student has submitted the supplemental assignment that is deemed satisfactory, only then should the instructor of record sign the Course Waiver Form for that course.
11. If the instructor of record has signed the Course Waiver Form and the faculty adviser also agrees that the old course is equivalent to the UK course, then the faculty advisor can also sign the Course Waiver Form.
12. All double-signed Course Waiver Forms should be placed in the student’s permanent SharePoint file by the advisor.
13. The student’s Program of Study should be updated to reflect all waivers.

**Checklist of Course Waiver Steps:**

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| --- | --- |
|  | Student reviews UK syllabi for potential equivalence to prior courses |
|  | Student provides completed Tables 1 and 2 and prior course documentation to advisor |
|  | Advisor gives initial impression about potentially waivable UK courses and identifies UK instructors of record for student to email |
|  | Students emails each identified UK instructor of record using template email |
|  | Student hears back from each instructor of record regarding waiver decision |
|  | When appropriate, instructor of record and advisor both sign course waivers |
|  | Double signed course waivers are placed in student’s SharePoint file by advisor. |
|  | Student updates their Program of Study to reflect approved waivers |

**Table** **1**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| UK Course # | UK Course Name | Prior Graduate-Level Course(s) # | Prior Graduate-Level Course(s) Name | Does the prior course(s) cover >90% of the topical content as the UK course? (No/Yes) | What topical content in the UK Course was not covered by the prior course? | Can you provide appropriate written documentation for prior course that summarizes the (1) topics covered during each weekly course seminar, (2) descriptions of required assignments/assessments, and (3) required readings? |
| EDP 513 | Social Psychological Issues in Education | PSY 600 | Social Psychology | Yes | Implicit attitudes, aggression | Yes |
| EDP 558 | Gathering, Analyzing, and Using Educational Data II | PSY 555 & PSY 556 | Group Comparison & Measuring Associations | Yes, the 2 prior courses collectively cover >90% of EDP 558 | None. | Yes, syllabi for 555 and 556 are provided as a single PDF entitled “Waiver Documentation for EDP 558” |
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Note: the two grey rows are sample entries and can be deleted.

**Table 2**

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| **Required Topic Areas for KY Licensure (similar for most U.S. States and for some other Countries)** | What is the **name of the course** you will use to fulfill this licensure requirement? If not the listed UK course, replace it with the course number and name | Is the name of the required topic area clearly **reflected** in the name of the course? (Y/N) | Do you have an official **syllabus** for that course that, if requested by the licensure board, you can attach to your licensure application? (Y/N) |
| Research Methodology | EDP 656 |  |  |
| Statistics | EDP 558 |  |  |
| Scientific and Professional Ethics and Standards | EDP 688 |  |  |
| Biological Bases of Behavior (e.g., Physiological Psych) | PSY 627 |  |  |
| Cognitive-Affective Bases of Behavior | EDP 603 |  |  |
| Social Bases of Behavior (e.g., Social Psychology) | EDP 513 |  |  |
| Individual Differences (e.g., Human Development) | EDP 600 |  |  |
| Psychopathology, Advanced Abnormal Psychology | EDP 650 |  |  |
| Counseling Theories, Techniques, or Systems | EDP 605 (or 652) |  |  |
| Practicum in Counseling | EDP 665 (when at a practicum focused on talk therapy) |  |  |
| Assessment of Intellectual, Personal, Social and Vocational Functioning of the Individual | EDP 642 (or 640) |  |  |
| Practicum in Assessment | EDP 665 (when at a practicum with a strong psychological assessment component) |  |  |
| Theories of Career Counseling and Development | EDP 666 |  |  |

Note: you may be ineligible for future psychology licensure if you answered “No” at least once in the third or fourth column of this Table.