

FAQs about Certification

Who can observe my logbook cases? Do they have to attend the whole session?

Five logbook cases must be at least partially observed by a supervisor. The supervisor may be a FHGSA GC (2 year post certification), another qualified counselling supervisor who meets the criteria in the HGSA supervision policy for genetic counsellors, a clinical geneticist or a fully qualified medical professional with expertise in genetics. They do not need to be present for the entire session but need to attend a *significant proportion*. The supervisor must sign the case observation form and mark the competencies that were observed. Not all competencies on the list need to be observed. You may wish to print copies of the form to make it easy for a supervisor to fill it out on the same day – it should only take a few minutes. The idea of these forms is to be completed together with the observer as this provides a learning opportunity for the candidate.

Who can observe my session for the second reflective task? Do they need to attend the whole session?

This task is designed to enhance professional development through experiential learning and immediacy of feedback. The candidate will conduct a consultation with their genetic counselling supervisor present for the entire session. This may be in person or via telehealth. If the candidate's usual genetic counselling supervisor cannot attend, then another supervisor who meets requirements for genetic counselling or counselling supervisors can stand in (see the HGSA Supervision Policy for Genetic Counsellors). If the candidate is not able to find an appropriate supervisor to observe a session, they should contact the Certification Committee to discuss other options. For example, a member of the Certification Committee may be able to join a telehealth session. The observing supervisor is asked to provide feedback in writing to the candidate as soon as practicable after the session. A Supervisor Feedback Letter Template is available on the Certification Committee page of the HGSA website. Candidates will need to check with their organisation if a confidentiality form is required for supervisors who work outside their organisation.

Given there are now only three long cases, is the submission standard higher?

The submission standard will be expected to be of high professional standard, with less leniency on accepting work with errors. Some tips for candidates are:

- Please use Australian English spelling
- Please use appropriate and up to date language (for example pathogenic variant is more appropriate than mutation)
- Referencing to be in APA 7th Edition
- Please pay close attention to accuracy and formatting of pedigrees as per the references in the guidelines, ensuring appropriate labelling of probands, family history details, accurate symbols etc. Pedigrees will not be accepted if incorrect.
- Please ensure that you relate the genetics section to the specific case presented

Can I use tables and figures in my long cases?

Yes, you are welcome to use tables or figures to summarise information discussed in your counselling section. We request these are used infrequently and only provide a summary, rather than to present a significant proportion of information.

If my genetic counselling supervisor doesn't work with me or is outside the field of genetic counselling, are they appropriate person to complete my supervisors report?

The purpose of the supervisor's report is to show the certification committee you are meeting all competencies within your practice. If a genetic counselling supervisor is unable to comment on the majority of the competencies in your supervisor's report, it would be recommended that a manager, senior genetic counsellor or medical practitioner to complete an additional supervisor's report to show you are meeting all competencies. If there is any confusion, please reach out to the certification committee about your individual situation for advice.

I don't do any research in my role; how do I meet the competency 'Research' (Critically analyse evidence to inform practice) in my logbook?

All genetic counsellors conduct research in preparation for appointments by reading guidelines, journal articles, literature, and reviews. The committee is looking to see that candidates are remaining up to date with current practice and applying this to their genetic counselling process. This competency is not about a research role.