

PROGRESSION CRITERIA

This course differs from an academic course in that simply completing the required number of years training, submitting assignments, and attending class is not enough to ensure graduation. In other words, this course may take you more than four years to complete. Four years is the minimum set by GANZ. Some people need more time. **DO NOT ASSUME** you will complete the course in 4 years. The Institute does not guarantee this will occur. If you are asked for instance to do additional personal work, this is in the context of training and support for your development.

** There are three fundamental components indicating readiness to practice as a Gestalt therapist:*

1. Grasp of theory and ability to integrate with therapeutic practice.
2. Level of practice skills.
3. Personal integration and balance, including an ability to bracket personal issues and engage effectively.

* You need to demonstrate adequate development in all these areas. Some people may be able to achieve this in four years, but others may take longer. **Progression from year to year is not automatic** - you need to fulfil the specified criteria and, in addition, you need to demonstrate a personal readiness to move on to the next year.

Readiness is demonstrated by:

- * a willingness to participate effectively in the group process.
- * a willingness to challenge yourself personally.
- * being aware of your growing edges.
- * working on your personal issues effectively.
- * being able to bracket personal issues when working as therapist.
- * understanding the transference/projection process and 'owning' your projections in the group process.
- * commitment : demonstrated in a variety of ways such as punctuality, attendance, and submission of assignments on time.

Possible restraints to moving on to the next year include:

- * repeated ineffective personal dynamics in group without resolution.
- * difficulty taking responsibility for personal issues – indicated by consistently projecting blame towards other group members.
- * difficulty with appropriate self-disclosure and self-reflection.
- * engaging in shaming behaviour through inappropriate interpersonal dynamics.

- * an inability to bracket personal issues when working as therapist.
- * an inability to empathetically engage with the other and reverse roles - to put oneself into the other's position.
- * consistently dissociating or disengaging from group process.
- * monopolising group time as a result of a consistently high level of need.
- * frequently out of contact/awareness with one's own behaviour or

- impact on others in the group.
- * an inability to adequately support self through personal processes.
 - * an unwillingness to submit to the process of learning by holding a 'superior' attitude.
 - * inability to bracket extreme emotion and enter into dialogue with others.
 - * if students have not completed all academic work, therapy hours, client contact hours and or supervision.
 - * any serious contravention of the GANZ Code of Ethics.

If it is necessary to take extra time to complete training, or to get extra support such as additional therapy hours, this is NOT an indication of 'failure', but simply a personalised need to take more time to develop competency in one of the three major areas.

At the end of each year students and the Institute collaborate on the question of progression. There are a number of choices - continue on, continue on under Contract, repeat a year, take a break from training, do an interim year, or cease completely. These choices will be discussed with a view to best supporting each student's development. The lecturer/facilitator may stipulate certain requirements in order to continue on in the training process, which may include deferral whilst other developmental work takes place (such as extra personal therapy).

At times there may be a difference in views; in the end the lecturer/facilitator may make a final decision which the trainee may not agree with. Such circumstances can be difficult, but it is important that the lecturer/facilitator exercise their best judgement, ultimately keeping the trainee's development needs as a therapist in mind.

If students have a concern about a faculty member and their decision around progression, and the issue is unable to be resolved between them, then the student can request a mediated session with a mutually agreed faculty member from another training group. If no resolution is achieved then the matter can be taken to the Director of Training of the Institute. As a final step a formal complaints process may be initiated through the Gestalt association GANZ.

The period during the final term of the training year tends to be a 'flux' time: people looking to the future, evaluating changes that have occurred. One common mistake trainees make is to confluently tie their training plans into that of others. To base a decision on '*what is everyone else doing?*' is not the best way to make ongoing decisions around training.

Ultimately the faculty of Sydney Gestalt Institute is responsible for the quality of therapists who graduate.

Procedures for assessment for progression:

* Throughout the course students will be assessed on their competencies as indicated by the interviews mid-year, feedback forms at the end of the year, and final 'progression interviews' (if indicated by previous assessment procedures).

* If lecturers/ facilitators are concerned about the student's capacity to progress to the next level, as indicated by participation in the group, competencies in practice work, skills, essays and mid-year interviews, then the lecturer/ facilitator will ask the student to attend a 'progression interview' at the end of the year to discuss progression to the next level.

* Any requirement for extra therapy, theory or supervision hours will be taken into consideration also. The student may progress but under a Contract which details areas to focus on, in order to succeed.