



**Aotearoa/ New Zealand EMDR  
Association**

**Accreditation Guidelines:  
Minimum Criteria for EMDR  
Practitioners and Trainings**

## Section One: EMDR Training Participation Eligibility Criteria Introduction

This document is based on the International Guidelines for Minimum Criteria for EMDR Standards and Training (2018) as agreed by the Global Alliance, as well as the EMDR Europe Association accreditation guidelines. The overall aim of the guidelines is to establish and disseminate minimum training standards thereby maintaining the quality of EMDR education and facilitate the delivery of effective and efficient mental health services by all EMDR practitioners.

EMDR New Zealand (EMDRNZ) is tasked with establishing the minimum standards required for attending EMDR training, and for EMDR clinicians seeking accreditation for becoming accredited EMDR Practitioners, Consultants and Trainers, in New Zealand.

The purpose of this document is to outline the minimum standards for training and education that have been endorsed by EMDR NZ. While it is understood that minimum standards are not ideal or gold standards, it is hoped that all clinicians will aspire to standards that reflect the highest quality of training possible.

EMDRNZ requires that its members are professionals with cultural competencies already embedded in the requirements of their respective professional bodies. As such, a commitment to ongoing development in cultural competence is expected of all individuals applying for membership or accreditation with EMDR NZ.

### **Why is accreditation important?**

There are several reasons why EMDR NZ places emphasis on the importance of accreditation. In the acquisition and development of skills and knowledge, an EMDR clinician moves from being an EMDR novice to achieving a high level of proficiency and expertise. Accreditation serves as a significant marker of this achievement.

Accreditation has many benefits such as:

- Enhances the teaching and learning experience of the EMDR training.
- Increases the likelihood for ethically sound and robust EMDR clinical practice.
- Enhances EMDR treatment fidelity.
- Monitors and enhances patient protection by offering a reference point via the accreditation process.
- Enhances quality control.
- Contributes significantly to research fidelity by offering accreditation guidelines as reference point.

As a means of achieving this, the EMDR NZ Practice Sub-Committee has developed two competency-based frameworks, one for Accredited Practitioners and one for Accredited Consultants.

### **1. Prerequisites for Participation in Basic training in EMDR**

Training is restricted to mental health professionals with clinical experience who have a minimum of a four-year tertiary qualification (post-graduate diploma level or equivalent) or higher, relevant to the mental health sector. Qualifications include:

- Fully registered health professionals with specialist training in mental health (Psychiatry, Clinical Psychology, Psychotherapists, Nurses, Mental Health Social Workers). The training needs to include instruction in specific psychological interventions such as CBT, DBT etc.
- Mental health professionals not covered by New Zealand legislation, e.g., Counsellors, who have a minimum of four years academic study and have completed post-graduate qualifications (Honours, Graduate Diploma or higher) in mental health, and have undertaken training in specific psychological interventions and have worked two years full-time (or part-time equivalent) under supervision in a mental health setting.
- All clinicians should be registered with their professional association.
- Students who are in the process of completing their post-graduate degree may apply to participate in EMDR Basic Training but may not practice EMDR without supervision until their post-graduate degree is completed.

Professionals from other fields may also be considered provided they possess relevant academic qualifications, have undergone training in psychological interventions and have work experience in the mental health sector.

## Section Two: Practitioner Accreditation Criteria

### **2. Criteria for EMDR NZ Practitioner accreditation**

The central component of the competency-based framework for EMDR NZ Accredited Practitioners centres around the EMDR standard protocol. EMDR Clinicians are required to demonstrate competency in each of the eight phases of EMDR, as *assessed and determined by an EMDR NZ accredited Consultant*.

A clinician seeking accreditation as an EMDR NZ Practitioner has met the following minimum requirements:

- Has completed an accredited EMDR NZ Basic Training programme (see criteria for EMDR Basic training).
- Is a member of EMDR NZ.
- Has completed one year of clinical practice of EMDR following completion of the Basic Training.
- Has completed a minimum of 75 EMDR sessions following completion of the Basic Training.
- Has treated a minimum of 25 clients with EMDR Therapy.
- Has undertaken a minimum of 20 hours of consultation/ clinical supervision with an accredited EMDR NZ Consultant. Five of the 20 hours can be spent in a group consultation setting.
- As part of the above consultation, the applicant's EMDR Consultant has observed their practice of EMDR *throughout the 8-phases of the standard protocol*, either through a video recording or in-vivo.
- Has supplied two references, one from their EMDR NZ Consultant and the second from a colleague/manager who can comment on their professional practice and standing.

Once all the specified criteria are met, the applicant's Consultant will formally notify EMDR NZ in writing and apply for accreditation on the behalf of the applicant. For the purpose of this application, the Consultant will provide a written letter/email to the Secretary of the EMDR NZ Board in which the following is outlined:

- An assessment of the applicant's competencies in EMDR.
- Confirmation that the applicant has met all minimum requirements for accreditation.
- Acknowledgement of having reviewed the applicant's second reference (as mentioned earlier).
- Any other relevant information that supports the application for accreditation.

**Please note:** the application will not be considered until all the above information has been received.

## Section Three: Consultant Accreditation Criteria

### **3. Criteria for EMDR NZ Consultant accreditation**

EMDRNZ considers that the role of the EMDR Consultant is crucial for future development of EMDR. EMDR Consultants have a significant responsibility in maintaining quality and upholding high standards of practice in EMDR therapy. As a result, EMDR Consultants need to demonstrate their considerable EMDR clinical experience and expertise. Additionally, they are required to demonstrate their supervision, consultation, and teaching skills.

An EMDR accredited practitioner seeking accreditation as an EMDR NZ Consultants must meet the following requirements:

- Has a minimum of three years' experience as an accredited EMDR Practitioner.
- Is a member of EMDR NZ.
- Has treated a broad range of clients of varying diagnoses and complexity with EMDR Therapy.
- Has completed and documented a minimum of 400 EMDR client sessions (a session is a therapy meeting with a client, usually 50-90 minutes long).
- Out of the 400 client sessions of EMDR Therapy a maximum of 40 sessions can be completed with more than 1 person at a time (e.g. group-based EMDR sessions, couples-based EMDR sessions).
- Has treated a minimum of 75 clients with EMDR Therapy. This can include clients seen before accreditation as a Practitioner, as long as the sessions are following the date of the Practitioner accreditation.
- Has participated in regular clinical supervision of their EMDR clinical work with an accredited EMDR NZ Consultant.
- Has undertaken a minimum of 20 hours of consultation/clinical supervision, focusing on their provision of EMDR case consultation, with an accredited EMDR NZ Consultant.
- Has submitted a minimum of three video recordings or in-vivo sessions which are to be assessed by two EMDR NZ accredited Consultants, where one of those is the applicant's main Consultant. The three videos must include one of each of the following:
  - an EMDR clinical session
  - an individual EMDR clinical supervision session
  - a group-based EMDR clinical supervision session
- Has undertaken a minimum of 75 hours of EMDR-related Continuous Professional Development (CPD) (this may include traumatology) since becoming an EMDR Practitioner. These CPD hours may include conferences, webinars, and workshops, but not reading.
- Has observed all parts of the Basic Training to refresh their knowledge and technical understanding of EMDR basic training. Once this component has been completed, the applicant can be listed as a "Consultant in Training" on the EMDR NZ website.

- An applicant and their supervising Consultants may benefit from familiarising themselves with relevant assessment frameworks such as the EMDR Fidelity Rating Scale and the EMDR Europe Practitioner Competency-based Framework, for guidelines concerning the breadth and depth of areas of competency to be assessed.
- Once all the specified criteria are met, the applicant's Consultant will formally notify EMDR NZ in writing and apply for accreditation on behalf of the applicant. For the purpose of this application, the Consultant will provide a written letter or email to the Secretary of the EMDR NZ Board in which the following is outlined:
  - An assessment of the candidate's competencies in EMDR.
  - Confirmation that the candidate has met all minimum requirements for accreditation.
  - Any other relevant information that supports the accreditation application.

**Please note:** the application will not be considered until all the above information has been received.

## Section Four: Trainer Accreditation Criteria

### **4. Criteria for EMDR NZ Trainer accreditation**

Accreditation as an EMDR trainer represents the highest standard that EMDR NZ can award. An EMDR NZ-approved trainer is also an approved case-consultant in EMDR who meets all the requirements for providing EMDR NZ-approved EMDR Basic Trainings. Trainers undergo rigorous competency-based examinations before they are certified to conduct trainings. The training programme, which includes approved educational material like lectures, adheres to the ethical standards of mental health boards in Aotearoa/NZ.

An EMDR Consultant seeking accreditation as an EMDR NZ Trainer must meet the following requirements:

- Must be a registered mental health practitioner or clinician and a member of EMDR NZ.
- Must provide video evidence of their EMDR clinical practice. Applicants are required to submit two videos demonstrating their EMDR practice:
  - The first video should capture a complete EMDR therapy session, beginning from the end of Phase 2 (which includes an explanation of their safe, calm state and the introduction of the 'stop sign'), and continuing through to the end of Phase 7. Details for Phases 1 and 8 (e.g. diagnosis) should be provided in writing.
  - The second video may be of shorter duration but should focus specifically on the skillful use of cognitive interweaves.

Both videos must demonstrate the applicant's understanding and execution of the EMDR protocol at a level that would be expected of a qualified trainer.

- A minimum of 2 years' post-certification experience as an EMDR Consultant with evidence of thorough experience in clinical practice. This will include evidence of having treated acute and complex trauma and chronic complex dissociative disorders. This must be corroborated by a written statement from an accredited trainer.
- Attendance of a minimum of 5 complete EMDR Basic training courses (all parts), where the candidate is assessed to have successfully facilitated small group live practice and practical exercises, including work with cognitive interweave techniques. This must be corroborated by a written statement from an accredited trainer.
- Clinical Practice: at least 40% of professional time is spent in clinical practice (including clinical supervision), or at least 1 day per week if the applicant works part-time.
- Prior teaching / presenting experience is highly recommended, for example teaching students, presenting at professional association trainings, facilitating psycho-education groups, etc.
- The applicant must have presented all the main parts of an accredited

EMDRNZ training course at a satisfactory level as assessed and evaluated by an accredited EMDR NZ trainer. This includes an ability to engage effectively with the audience by answering questions appropriately and managing the group process.

- Once all specified criteria have been met, the assessing EMDR NZ accredited Trainer will provide a written testimonial outlining the evidence of this.
- The applicant is also required to include and sign the following statement in their application:

*"I confirm that all statements and evidence I have provided to the committee are truthful and accurate. I confirm that I will have integrity in my teaching and practice, and that I will uphold the ethical and professional standards and rules of my professional body."*

**Please note:** the application will not be considered until all the above information has been received.



## Section Five: RE-Accreditation Criteria

### **5. Re-accreditation & Continuing Education**

The EMDR NZ re-accreditation process is required by all EMDR Practitioners, Supervisors/Consultants, and Trainers every five years. Successfully completing this process will ensure the continued listing of the applicant on the EMDR NZ website.

The application for EMDR Practitioner/Consultant re-accreditation should include:

- Proof that the applicant is a full member of the EMDR NZ.
- Evidence that the applicant has previously met the accreditation criteria (certified EMDR NZ) and that they have full professional standing/status, and not facing any disciplinary consideration/action.
- Evidence that the applicant has acquired 50 EMDR-based credits during the preceding 5-year period since the last accreditation (1 hour = 1 credit). EMDR-related activities that could contribute to the credits need to include a reasonable mix and may include attendance at conferences, presentations, research activities, teaching activities and contributions to the development of EMDR at national or local level.
- EMDR NZ has the discretion to consider mitigating circumstances when the re-accreditation criteria have not been met and still allow the re-accreditation. Mitigating criteria could include special personal circumstances or the overall benefit for the purposes of EMDR NZ if some, but not all criteria are met, for example parental leave.
- If re-accreditation is not applied for, or the applicant fails to meet the required standard, the accreditation will be withdrawn, and the member will be removed from the list of accredited practitioners on the EMDR NZ website.
- If re-accreditation is not applied for or is not granted, the applicant will not be permitted to refer to themselves as an accredited EMDR NZ Practitioner/Consultant or use the term EMDR accredited Practitioner/Consultant in their professional literature and communications.
- Members without accreditation will not be able to use or display the EMDR NZ logo.
- A member whose accreditation has lapsed will be required to re-apply for and complete a lapse member accreditation application in consultation with an EMDR NZ Consultant/Supervisor.

The application for EMDR Trainer re-accreditation should include:

- Proof that the applicant is a full member of the EMDR NZ.
- Evidence that the applicant has previously met the accreditation criteria (certified EMDR NZ) and that they have full professional standing/status, and not facing any disciplinary consideration/action.
- Proof that the applicant has undertaken a minimum of 50 hours of continuing education in EMDR and/or traumatology in the preceding 5 years. This must include attendance at 3 EMDR NZ or International conferences and 3 International trainers' days if possible (or EMDR NZ Trainer days once

established).

- A written account of how the applicant has kept up to date with the most recent developments in EMDR and related research.
- A written account of the applicant's participation in activities that promote EMDR.
- A written account of the number of Basic Training courses delivered by the applicant and how many participants have been trained in the preceding 5 years.
- The applicant must keep copies of all participant evaluation forms for the preceding 3 years.
- It is strongly recommended that the applicant be involved in activities besides teaching of EMDR that demonstrate support for the development of EMDR (e.g., membership of national or international EMDR bodies and workgroups, writing of articles and book chapters, undertaking scientific studies, etc.).
- At least 40% of professional time must be in clinical practice (including clinical supervision) and pro rata 40% if working part time.
- The applicant is required to provide confirmation that their training course complies with EMDR NZ regulations, with the following wording used:  
*"I confirm that I have read the document "EMDR NZ Association Accreditation Guideline: Minimum Criteria for EMDR Practitioners and Training". I confirm that I and my training course are fully compliant with this document. I attach an overview of the programme and the content of my training course that demonstrates that I am adhering to the above criteria."*
- The applicant is required to disclose any complaints that have been made against them in any context in the preceding 5 years. EMDR NZ may ask them to disclose the details of that complaint.
- The applicant is required to submit a statement about their commitment to maintaining integrity in both teaching and psychotherapeutic practice. This statement should also indicate the applicant's willingness and professional duty to adhere to the ethical and professional standards of their respective professional body. The submission for reaccreditation as a trainer should conclude with the following statement:  
*"I confirm that all statements and evidence I have provided to the committee are truthful and accurate. I confirm that I will have integrity in my teaching and practice, and that I will uphold the ethical and professional standards and rules of my professional body."*

## Section Six: EMDR Basic Training Accreditation Criteria

Trainers and their training programmes including all materials, must be accredited by the EMDR NZ Board to offer an accredited EMDR training programme in New Zealand. The EMDR NZ Board reserves the right to impose additional requirements and/or request supporting material in addition to those outlined below.

**The core components (at a minimum) for an accredited EMDR programme include:**

**1. *Trainer Qualifications (see section on Trainer accreditation)***

- Responsibilities of the Trainer:
  - Trainings should be organised within the trainer's national boundaries.
  - If a New Zealand-based and accredited trainer is delivering Basic Training in partnership with internationally accredited trainers, the New Zealand accredited trainer bears the overall responsibility for meeting EMDR NZ's training criteria. As the lead trainer, the New Zealand accredited trainer is obliged to ensure that the international trainer is accredited in their country of residence. Furthermore, the New Zealand-accredited trainer will be responsible for signing the training certificates.
- The trainer should:
  - Notify EMDR NZ of the schedule of the training.
  - Inform participants about the process of accessing consultation.
  - Provide information during Basic Training about the national association, including how to join EMDR NZ.
- If the trainer wishes to conduct training outside their own country, they should have the approval from the EMDR national organisation in the country where the proposed training is to occur prior to announcing the training. In the absence of an association, the trainer is obliged to contact the regional association for that geographical area to obtain consent for the training. Consent will be based on the following:
  - The trainer, training material, and the curriculum must be approved by the national/regional EMDR association in the geographical region where the training is to be held.
  - The trainer must uphold all standards for training that are established in the country or region where the training is to be held.

**2. *Curriculum Criteria (Minimum)***

- The syllabus should be consistent with Shapiro, F. (2018). *Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) therapy: Basic principles, protocols, and procedures* (3rd ed.). The Guilford Press.
- The content of the training and all training manuals must be approved by

EMDRNZ.

- The trainer may determine the order in which material is presented, although some advanced information should only be taught after the trainee has had time to practice basic EMDR skills.
- The EMDR training should only include EMDR-related material. During EMDR training, it is unacceptable to train participants in the application of other intervention methods not consistent with Shapiro's textbook.
- The training should contain various exercises to build experience and skills in implementing standard EMDR protocols and procedures.

### **3. Structure of Training**

The following constitutes the current minimum standards for the structure of EMDR Basic Training:

- A minimum of 20 hours of lectures.
- A minimum of 20 hours of supervised practice within the training environment (see 'Supervised Practicum').
- A minimum of 10 hours of case consultation must be included as a part of Basic Training (see 'Consultation as Part of Basic Training').

### **4. Supervised Practicum**

- The goal of Supervised Practicum is to facilitate the demonstration and practice of the EMDR methodology as outlined above in Shapiro's text.
- The practicum sessions should be appropriately scheduled to allow adequate teaching time for the full explanation of the component to be demonstrated and practiced.
- Practicum includes group exercises to strengthen understanding of the theoretical model and the methods. Clinical practice exercises may be done in dyads or triads.
  - The role of the clinician is required for each participant.
  - The role of "client" is required for each participant.
  - The role of "observer" is preferred but not mandatory. It is recognised that it is not always possible to fill the role of observer during the supervised practicum.
- Faculty Requirement: Practicum faculty may be an Accredited Trainer or an Accredited Consultant. *(Please note that the EMDR Institute requires a Case Consultant also qualified as a Facilitator to do this role).*

### **5. Consultation as part of Basic Training**

Consultation provides an opportunity for the integration of the theory of EMDR along with the development of EMDR skills. During consultation, trainees receive individualised feedback and instruction in the areas of case conceptualisation, client readiness, target selection, treatment planning, specific application of skills, and the integration of EMDR into clinical practice:

- Consultation must be provided by an Accredited Trainer or Accredited Consultant. Please note that for an EMDR Institute Training only a trainer or Facilitator may provide case consultation as part of the training. Facilitators are accredited consultants, who have undergone additional training with an

accredited trainer.

- A minimum of 10 hours of consultation are required (usually 5 hours after each part of the basic training).
- Clinical consultation can be completed in person or online and may adopt any of the following formats:
  - Group consultation.
  - Individual consultation.

## Section Seven: Application from overseas accredited Practitioners, Consultants and Trainers

Any accreditation application made to EMDR NZ from an overseas trained applicant shall require the applicant to work with an EMDR NZ Consultant/Trainer to verify compliance with EMDR NZ criteria.