

Ethical Guidelines for Online Attendance

Hybrid or blended approaches in the education community have become more prevalent over the past few years. Though the former approaches make allowance for online or remote attendance, they have presented new challenges which we seek to clarify. These approaches may impact learning trajectories based/depending on the extent to which digital technology is incorporated, the ethical systems applied, and the influence these may have on the teacher and student - both professionally and personally.

EAPTI-GPTIM Ethical Guidelines, Principles and Code of Conduct, GDPR principles, and Academic Integrity's five fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility, are still the backdrop to all the guidelines discussed forthwith regarding online or remote attendance.

A. EAPTI-GPTIM Groups, Assessments, and Training

1. The Gestalt groups' rationale encompasses attaining knowledge and training through understanding the nature of psychotherapeutic work and experiencing it from the position of the client, therapist, and observer. Moreover, it requires students to contribute, participate, evaluate, and assess clinical case interventions and discussions while providing a learning experience with peers. The main aim is, therefore, to prepare the student for clinical practice. Thus, the focus is on group dynamics, personal growth as a therapist, and the opportunity to practice with peers and learn from the teacher in a live simulated environment.

Due to the depth of sessions and group interactions, in-person attendance is obligatory. Permission must be sought from the teacher /Institute Director when this is not possible due to exceptional circumstances (medical or other).

2. GPTIM Assessments, Supervision, and Exams depict the student's academic performance and the ability to progress and complete the program. Though completed individually, most assessments, presentations, supervision, and exams are presented in groups. These assessments, supervision, and exams can be attended in person or online according to agreement with the examiner/teacher/supervisor.

3. Workshops and seminars, as indicated by the school handbook, involve training required throughout the course. These need to be attended in person unless otherwise permitted or indicated by the teacher/Institute Director; the seminar or workshop is occurring solely online; or is organized abroad and specifically requires online attendance.

B. General Guidelines and Ethical Principles

Students must fulfill the EAPTI-GPTIM ethical principles and values set out in the Ethical Framework and other codes of conduct and guidelines, and GDPR principles regardless of whether attending online, in person, or using any other methods of communication. Additional ethical guidelines particular to online work are the following:

Attendance

1. Online attendance needs to be approved by the teacher/Institute Director at least 5 hours before the commencement of the session.

2. The teacher/Institute Director may require in-person attendance for specific sessions due to the course content that will be explored.
3. Equally active participation is expected during online sessions, without any distractions to the learning process for oneself and the other participants.

Participation

1. The Camera must always be on (with the name and surname displayed clearly) unless otherwise specified by the teacher. The host or leader of the event can put the participants in the waiting room if the camera is off without a preliminary note.
2. The internet, camera, and audio quality must be clear and functional to participate and contribute effectively to the session.
3. Students should be sufficiently competent in technology to use reliable and adequate services to follow and contribute to EAPTI-GPTIM sessions that are being pursued online.
4. A respectful dress code and environment are expected during online sessions.
5. Please refrain from having meals during online sessions. Water/other beverages are acceptable.
6. Please control pets during sessions not to interrupt contact.

Security and Confidentiality

There are always restrictions to the security and confidentiality offered in the digital world, which must be understood and managed wherever possible. Security threats may arise through technology al and equipment failure and not taking adequate steps to protect security and confidentiality. Thus, the following need to be adhered to:

1. Confidentiality is of utmost importance. No recording is allowed at all times or saving of any data of online activities unless permission by the teacher/Institute Director is given.
2. The space from where the online session is being attended needs to be confidential, ensuring that there are no others around you and adequate hearing and visual distance.
3. Distractions to the self or others in the group are inappropriate for the therapeutic and learning context and, therefore, unacceptable.
4. Re-checking privacy settings is advisable, such as: creating solid passwords, keeping software up to date, and reviewing apps on devices to ensure security measures are in place.
5. Be aware of the risk that digital information could be intercepted by a third party, either remotely or by someone with in-person access to your computer or phone because appropriate security measures have not been set up. If a third party has breached confidentiality, this needs to be addressed and discussed with the teacher/Institute Director immediately.

C. Breach of Ethical Guidelines and Principles

While taking all stringent precautions to safeguard online confidentiality, GPTIM cannot be held responsible for any general guidelines and principles breach.

D. Provisos

These guidelines may be reviewed and updated according to situations that may arise at the discretion of the Institute Director and EAPTI-GPTIM Board.

I take full responsibility for my actions and understand that GPTIM cannot be held responsible for breaching general guidelines and principles.

Date:

Student's name and surname
