



Professor Brin Grenyer  
Chair  
Psychology Board of Australia  
PO Box 16085 Collins Street West  
Melbourne Vic 8007

7 June 2010

Dear Professor Grenyer,

### **Re: Consultation on Guideline: Approved training programs in psychology supervision**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above guideline. As the Placement Chair for the Post-graduate Coursework committee at Macquarie University, my response will reflect the possible impact and role of the supervision training program on Universities. The Board's recognition that supervision is a separate skill that needs to be taught, assessed and maintained by competency based standards is to be applauded. The transition to the new standards however will pose certain challenges as well as open opportunities for the University sector if addressed by the Board.

As Macquarie University is in NSW, many of our supervisors for Masters/Doctorate practical placements will have completed the NSW Registration Board training and will be "grandfathered" across to the new standards, however many will not. Other Universities outside of NSW/ Queensland will now find themselves with no approved supervisors. Unlike, the 4+2 Internship program and supervision for endorsement, where Supervisors will either be paid by the recipient or doing the supervision as part of their job description, University supervisors are often volunteers who believe that their contribution to the field is under-recognised. Remuneration is not usually an option. Therefore the risk to University programs is that many supervisors will find the new requirements too onerous or believe that the University should provide/ pay for the supervision training, which is also not possible. As some way of addressing their concerns, it would be helpful if Universities were able to send through lists of their appointed supervisors to be added to the approval list as of 1 July 2010, pending completion of their training to meet the new standards by 30 June 2013, rather than relying on/ pushing supervisors to do it themselves.

Further, it would be helpful if the Board could clarify under the new system how Supervisors for the higher degree program pathway will be monitored by the Board. Will the University need to register/ check their use of specific supervisors with the Board? Or will it be assumed that the Universities are complying with the new standards? Do we trust the honesty of the supervisor? Overall, where will ultimate responsibility lie for compliance?

In addition, it is unclear from the guidelines whether the Psychology Board will be asking for submissions from many program developers but then only choosing one program for supervision training for use across Australia, or many programs. Assuming the former, it is envisaged that the Board will need as many trained workshop leaders as possible to meet demand around the country. One option to be considered is that Universities are given the option to become certified trainers that can then provide these services to their supervisors as necessary and potentially at much reduced cost to the participants.

It is also worth noting that the current training program in NSW has much content focussed on the specific administrative requirements of the 4+2 pathway which is not relevant to the University pathway, or to endorsement in a

specific area. It would be hoped that the new training program would be therefore more generic (as implied in the Guideline) however the Board will then need to give some guidance on where the specific content of each pathway should be covered. Again, Universities are well placed to provide additional information concerning APAC requirements that relate specifically to this pathway.

Finally, Universities are well placed to conduct ongoing research into the Board Approved Supervisor training program. The requirement that providers do research into the program raises the question of the funding of such research. Will the Board be funding the research?

Regards,



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