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

11<sup>th</sup> June 2010

Dear Associate Professor Grenyer

Re: **Guidelines for the Approved Training of Supervisors in Psychology Consultation Paper**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the PBA's plans for the management of training of supervisors in psychology in Australia. I am responding based both on my observations as a coordinator of placements for a Master of Psychology (Clinical) program and the feedback of those clinical psychologists who currently supervise our students.

I am supportive of PBA's commitment to a high standard of supervisor training, based upon the existing evidence base for the most effective methods of doing so. In practical terms, however, this raises a number of concerns about the short-term impact of the proposals upon availability of approved supervisors of placements for our program in the transition. These arise as supervisors of students undertaking 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> year programs through Universities in NSW are currently not required to be approved as supervisors through the NSW Psychologists Registration Board and that the accreditation criteria for clinical psychology programs currently require that supervisors only be *eligible* for membership of the APS College of Clinical Psychologists.

**Requirement for supervisors to have endorsement:** While our supervisors meet the current accreditation requirements for clinical psychology programs, a significant number of them will not be eligible for endorsement in the clinical psychology area of practice at participation day as proposed in the Guidelines on Area of Practice Endorsements as they are not either members of the APS College of Clinical Psychologists or have not been approved to provide clinical psychology Medicare services. They may be able to provide sufficient evidence of a history of supervision, professional development and practice to apply for endorsement, but it is unclear how long this is likely to take. Some others may need to gather further evidence which may result in a delay in the approval of their endorsement. I am somewhat concerned that this would make some of our existing supervisors ineligible until this had been resolved, which could have a significant negative impact upon the progression of existing students.

**Requirement for supervisors to have undertaken approved training:** I recently reviewed the previous training in supervision of supervisors undertaking a training course on supervision which we delivered in 2009. Many of them have not undertaken the NSW Psychologists

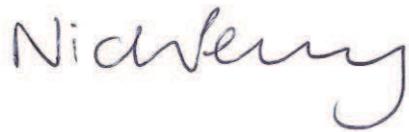
Registration Board approved training in supervision as they are not required to do so. Having completed the training myself I note that the focus is, understandably, upon those undertaking the 4+2 route in NSW and the relevance of some of it to those supervising students undertaking University courses is limited. Many have, however, undertaken a significant amount of supervisor training through the Universities. There is, therefore, likely to be a large number of existing supervisors who will need to undertake the training, and I would support the proposal that those who otherwise meet the requirements to be a supervisor but who have not previously completed approved programs are approved to continue their supervision duties and given a significant period of time within which to complete the training.

**Requirement for training providers to conduct research in the training of supervisors:** It is clear that there is only limited available evidence to guide best practice in this area, and I would support this proposal. However, some consideration to supporting the growth of research in this area may be warranted, including lobbying for the availability of funding to support it.

I would seek the assurance of the Board that existing supervisors approved by Universities for the provision of 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> year program students who will not be eligible for endorsement at participation day and are not currently approved supervisors by their State or Territory Board will be included in some kind of transition arrangement in order to avoid a sudden constriction in the number of supervisors available. It may also be that some supervisors of long-standing, particularly those close to retirement or working part-time, may find the new training requirements too onerous, and I am concerned that this may result in their loss to the profession in this capacity.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment. I look forward to hearing the result of the Board's deliberations on these matters.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kathryn Perry". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping 'y' at the end.

Kathryn Nicholson Perry