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**To:** NationalBoards  
**Subject:** RE: Psychology Board of Australia

Hello – some comments from our School:

In relation to the actual form itself, no issues were raised. More the issues underlying allowing clinical PhD students to become registered during their candidature.

The main concern was the possibility that students, once registered, would be more likely to delay progress on PhD or drop out / not finish their PhD. On reflection, given the structure of our degree, we thought this was probably a small risk. Our students don't finish their placements until the end of their 3<sup>rd</sup> year, thus they only have 1 more year to go in their degree so most would be well and truly advanced before they would be eligible for this (we suspect the risk is more for combined programs which most students are probably eligible for this after their 2<sup>nd</sup> year). Also, if they did drop out of their degree, our understanding is that they would then not be eligible to become endorsed as a clinical psychologist (for they need to have their PhD qualification for this). The only reason students would seek to get on the registrar program at the end of their 3<sup>rd</sup> year would be to become endorsed as a clinical psychologist. If they drop out, this won't be achieved. Of course, a student could become delayed in their degree if they became registered and started practising. While this has not been an issue in the past (we have had one student who did manage to get registered before they completed), it is something to keep an eye on.

The other big issue would be how to assess whether a student has completed sufficient research to be considered Masters-equivalent. We would be advocating a firm policy that would have to be agreed upon by the whole of the clinical group and Dean of School. At a minimum, perhaps, would be a publication in a peer-reviewed psychology journal at ERA rank B or higher (or confirmed to be in press)?

regards

Neil

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