



Communiqué

16th Meeting: 25 February 2011

The sixteenth meeting of the Psychology Board of Australia on 25 February 2011 was held at the National Offices of AHPRA in Melbourne. This was the first meeting of the year. This Communiqué aims to inform stakeholders about current matters and the decisions of the Board at that meeting.

Consultation Papers

The Board values comment and input from stakeholders when developing registration standards and codes and guidelines. The Board published three consultation papers in late 2010.

Submissions to the exposure draft of the *Guidelines on Area of Practice Endorsement* have been analysed, and a number of recommendations were taken to the Board in the February meeting. The Board is currently integrating these recommendations into the Codes and Guidelines and making changes to the relevant forms. These changes will be taken to the National Board for final approval at the April 2011 Board meeting.

The submissions for the consultation paper on the development of a *Registration standard for limited registration for teaching or research* and the revised *Professional Indemnity Insurance Arrangements Registration Standard* are currently being analysed.

Review of Provisional Registration Fees

The Psychology Board of Australia has waived the application fee for psychology provisional registration in all states and territories until 30 June 2011.

All individuals undertaking either a 4+2 pathway to general registration or an APAC accredited higher degree leading to general registration who apply for provisional registration before 30 June 2011 will be only required to pay the registration/renewal fee (\$390) but will not have to pay the \$410 application fee.

The Board is reviewing provisional registration fees in consultation with its finance and management committee and AHPRA. The review aims to ensure any changes are implemented for the 2011/2012 financial year and will include issues related to the re-application fee for provisional registration at the expiry of two renewal periods.

Supervisor Training Project Update

The Board has previously consulted on the *Guidelines for Approved Training Programs in Psychology Supervision*. The Board has analysed the submissions to this consultation paper and is currently obtaining advice about the structure of the national supervisor training program. Further information will be available to the psychology profession in due course.

Psychology Supervisor Mail Out

The introduction of the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act* (the National Law) as in force in each state and territory establishes a national public register which no longer identifies Board approved supervisors or permits full contact details to be made available as previously permitted via other mechanisms under legacy state and territory legislation. The only contact details permitted on the national public register are suburb and postcode of the principal place of practice or if unavailable the register defaults to the residential suburb and postcode.

The Board is aware that some Board approved supervisors wish to have their contact details made available for the purposes of providing supervisor services to provisional psychologists undertaking the 4+2 internship program or individuals undertaking the registrar program for area of practice endorsement. However, due to privacy legislation the Board must have the written consent of the supervisor to publish or provide information that is not included as part of the public register.

Therefore, Board approved supervisors who wish to have their contact details made available are being requested to provide their written consent to the Board.

Psychologists who were approved to provide supervision by a state or territory Board on 30 June 2010 (or 17 October 2010 for WA) were sent letters to confirm their consent in January 2011. If you did not receive a letter, and believe you have transitioned as a Board approved supervisor, please contact the Board's Executive Assistant, Gabrielle FitzGerald at Gabrielle.FitzGerald@ahpra.gov.au.

From 1 July 2010 an application form for Board approved supervisors was available which included a section for the provision of consent to publish the details as listed above. Therefore any psychologist who has applied to be a Board approved supervisor since 1 July 2010 does not need to confirm their consent at this time.

Policy Matters

In addition to developing registration standards, and codes and guidelines, the Board develops policies that support the implementation of the codes and guidelines. The Board has been developing a number of policies since its September 2010 meeting.

The following policies will be published shortly on the Board's website under Policies, Codes and Guidelines at <http://www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Codes-and-Guidelines.aspx>:

- policy for working in addition to placements (for higher degree provisional psychologists)
- policy for place of practice removal
- policy for changing states (Principle Place of Practice) for pre 1 July 2010 4+2 Internship registrants
- policy for assessing overseas qualifications.

National Psychology Examination

The National Psychology examination is being developed to support applications for general registration, and to ensure a consistent professional standard of psychologists nationally. The Board advises that the national examination will be implemented on 1 July 2013 for applicants seeking general registration. The examination will be the final assessment before moving from provisional to general registration. In April 2011 the Board aims to publish for public comment, a consultation paper on the format and curriculum of the examination. In June it aims to publish the final guidelines for candidates sitting the examination from 1 July 2013.

The development of the examination is supported by an appointed panel. The Board determined at its meeting in September 2010 that the National Psychology Examination Panel

would meet six times in 2011. During this meeting the Board approved a process for appointing practitioners to the panel, and announced a call for expressions of interest (EOI) through its stakeholders. The Board was very pleased with the strong response to its EOI and is thankful for the high quality of applications received. In considering the applications, the Board considered the mix of areas of expertise of candidates in relation to the competencies to be tested, and the range and depth of experience in applied psychology relevant to testing candidates on entry to the psychology profession.

The Board approved the following members to the National Psychology Examination Panel in response to this EOI in the November 2010 meeting:

External Members appointed from the Expression of Interest:

Barry Fallon (Victoria)
Ed Helmes (North Queensland)
Justin Kenardy (Queensland)
Rachel Phillips (Queensland)
Janet Stephenson (South Australia)
Alison Soutter (NSW)

Psychology Board of Australia members on the panel:

Brin Grenyer (Chair)
Kaye Frankcom
Radek Stratil

The first meeting of the panel was held on Saturday and Sunday 11 and 12 February 2011.

5+ 1 Program

The Board has previously published a General registration standard on its website. This standard was approved by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council on 31 March 2010 under the National Law, with approval taking effect from 1 July 2010. One option (option b) for registration is a five year accredited sequence of study followed by a one year Board approved internship (5+1). The Board will shortly be developing and consulting on guidelines for the 5+1 program, focusing on the 6th year internship. The specifications for the 5th year of this pathway are published in the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC) standard. The 6th year is anticipated to be equal to half the current 4+2 program, i.e. an internship of 1540 hours in duration meeting the competencies in the 4+2 program.

Nomenclature

The Board would like to clarify its nomenclature.

The National Board is called the Psychology Board of Australia or “the Board”.

To avoid confusion with other boards in the National Scheme, including the boards for physiotherapy, pharmacy, and podiatry, the Psychology Board of Australia avoids using the abbreviation PBA. The colloquial terminology for the Board is PsyBA (e.g. for use in emails). The preference is to use the Psychology Board of Australia (“the Board”).

The Board has delegated individual registration and notification functions to the State and Territory Boards, and the National Board deals with policy issues. The Regional boards are called the “State and Territory Boards of the Psychology Board of Australia” as per s.36 of the National Law. So for example, the correct term is the ACT, Tasmania and Victoria Board of the Psychology Board of Australia (or the ACT, TAS & VIC Regional Board in colloquial unofficial terminology). For NSW, the correct term is the New South Wales Board of the Psychology Board of Australia (or colloquially the NSW Regional Board).

NSW is known as a co-regulatory jurisdiction in that the National Law applies to registration and accreditation matters as it does in all the other states and territories while the Health Care Complaints Commission (HCCC) or NSW Council is responsible for notifications (complaints) in that jurisdiction under its own legislation.

Board Committees

The following State and Territory Boards of the Psychology Board of Australia are continuing to meet to address individual registration and notification issues:

- ACT, Tasmania & Victoria
- New South Wales
- Northern Territory & Queensland
- South Australia & Western Australia

The Board has received 1200 new applications for provisional, general and non-practicing registration since July 2010. More than 3700 psychologists have renewed their registration during this time. The Board is currently analysing over 260 notifications made about psychologists nationally.

There are new requirements under the National Law for Regional Boards since 1 July 2011 (all states except WA) and 18 October 2011 (WA). The Board is currently reviewing the composition of the Regional Boards and considering advice to the Ministers on the effective composition of the Regional Boards.

Registration Renewal due 30 June 2011 for NSW and WA

Psychologists whose primary place of practice is in New South Wales (NSW) or Western Australia (WA) must renew their registration by 30 June 2011. AHPRA will send a renewal reminder letter to these psychologists four to eight weeks before the registration renewal is due. AHPRA will also send email reminders to all practitioners who have provided their email addresses. The Board encourages practitioners to provide their email address to AHPRA (by updating your contact details online). This will enable the Board to send e-newsletters and other important information for the profession, and AHPRA to contact practitioners about important registration or renewal information in an efficient and cost effective way.

Please be aware that the first renewal for NSW and WA practitioners under the new scheme will be for less than 12 months, to bring these psychologists into the new national registration cycle. This means that psychologists in NSW and WA will need to renew their registration by 30 June 2011 and again by 30 November 2011. The fee payable will vary pro-rata accordingly. This amount will be detailed on the registration renewal reminder that you will be sent by AHPRA four to eight weeks before your registration renewal is due. From November 2011, all psychologists with general registration will be due to renew by 30 November each year.

If you have moved address, or were registered in more than one state before the start of the National Scheme (1 July 2010 in NSW; 18 October in WA), it is important to check that your address details with AHPRA are up to date.

You can change your address online if you have received your ID and login. Go to 'Health Practitioner login' on the top right of the [Board's home page](#). If you have not received your ID and login please use the [online enquiry form](#) and select 'User ID' from the drop-down menu for category of enquiry, or call AHPRA on 1300 419 495 and ask our team for your user ID and login details. A request for change of address details is also published on the Register (Form CHDT-00) can be found at <http://www.ahpra.gov.au/Registration/Registration-Process/Common-Application-Forms.aspx>.

Psychologists can check when their registration is due by checking their registration status on the National Register through the website at www.ahpra.gov.au. Follow the prompts and then click on 'view details' in the right hand column to see your registration details.

Accreditation Matters

Under s.49 of the National Law, the Psychology Board of Australia requires accreditation reports from the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC) before it can approve the accredited programs of study as providing a qualification for the purposes of registration. At its February meeting, the Board approved the accreditation of courses at the Australian Catholic University, University of Canberra, University of Melbourne, University of New England. The Board approved the conditional accreditation of courses at Central Queensland University, Deakin University, Edith Cowan University, James Cook University, Macquarie University, and University of Ballarat.

These courses have been added to the Board's website at:
www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Accreditation

The Board also noted the discontinuation of a number of courses across the country consistent with s.51(2) of the National Law, including courses at Monash University and the University of Queensland. Students currently enrolled in these courses will still have their qualification recognised for registration when they graduate, but there will be no new enrolments for these courses.

APAC has informed the Psychology Board of Australia that there will be a number of site visits to Academic Organisational Units (AOU's) in 2011. The Board has approved a procedure for nomination and selection of Board representatives to participate in these site visits beginning March 2011.

Psychology Board of Australia Website

The Board has published national registration data that details Australia's psychology workforce on a new section of its website 'About Psychology'. Since Western Australia joined the national registration and accreditation scheme in October 2010, there are now three nationally-consistent types of registration across state and territory boundaries: general, provisional and non-practising.

The Board continues to publish important information on its website. Psychologists are encouraged to access the website regularly to keep up to date with guidelines, policies, frequently asked questions (FAQ's), fact sheets and registration standards. The Board has recently updated a number of its forms, including updating the title and numbering system of forms. Psychologists are encouraged to review these changes.

Newsletter

Issue 1 of the Psychology Board of Australia's Newsletter - 'Connections' - was published on the Board's website in December 2010. The Board encourages all registrants to read this newsletter, and familiarise themselves with the work of the Board.

The National Board is planning a regular e-newsletter for the profession. AHPRA has email addresses for approximately 50% of registrants, as not all former state and territory boards collected registrant email addresses. The National Board asks all registrants to update their details online and provide the Board with their email address as soon as possible (or when they register) so that they can receive e-newsletters in 2011.

Later in 2011, the Board will publish and circulate e-newsletters directly to all registrants for whom it has email addresses. In the meantime, the Board will publish the newsletter on its website.

The request for change of address details on the Register (Form CHDT-00) can be found at: <http://www.ahpra.gov.au/Registration/Registration-Process/Common-Application-Forms.aspx> and can be completed online. Alternatively registrants can update their address details when renewing their registration.

Stakeholder Meetings and Sydney Forum

Members of the Board have been very active in meeting with local registrants and stakeholders and presenting at local psychology meetings and universities. Presentations on the National Scheme have been made or will shortly be made in most jurisdictions.

Presentations were made in both the public and private sector, to universities, health services, school psychologists and APS Branches in Tasmania. The forum in Brisbane in early December 2010 was very well attended, with more than 400 psychologists hearing about transition to the national registration and accreditation scheme.

The Board is planning its next forum to be held in Sydney on Monday 4 April 2011 from 7pm – 9pm. Information will be posted on the website shortly with details about registering for this event.

The Board looks forward to continuing to work with its state and territory regional Boards, their committees and stakeholders to progress regulation of the psychology profession in the interests of the public and to high international standards in 2011.

Professor Brin Grenyer
Chair
Psychology Board of Australia
7 March 2011