



Communiqué

29 July 2011

This communiqué highlights key issues from the meeting of the Psychology Board of Australia on 29 July 2011. At each meeting, the Board considers a wide range of issues, many of which are routine and are not included in this communiqué.

Guidelines on Area of Practice Endorsements

Background

In March 2010 the Board issued *Consultation Paper 2: Codes and Guidelines* including a Guideline on Area of Practice Endorsements. This guideline was finalised after consultation and was in force from 1 July 2010. In August 2010, the Board released *Consultation Paper 5 - Proposed Revisions to the Guidelines on Area of Practice Endorsements*. The Board then revised this draft in response to stakeholder feedback, and in November 2010 released *Consultation Paper 7 - Exposure Draft: Guidelines on area of practice endorsements*. These aimed to:

- a) seek further stakeholder feedback on the proposed modifications to the guidelines and
- b) develop competencies for the newly approved health and community psychology area of practice endorsements.

Key changes

The core aspects of the guidelines have remained largely unchanged since the initial approved proposals. Amendments have focused on area of practice endorsement competencies and arrangements for doctorate candidates to ensure the guidelines are fair and reasonable. The Board appreciates the extensive stakeholder feedback during the course of this revision, and the willingness of colleagues and professional associations to contribute to this work both in public and private submissions.

The revised [Guidelines on Area of Practice Endorsements](#) are published on the Board's website.

Additional information and forms

A policy for early application for general registration for higher degree students has been developed to support the new [Guidelines on Area of Practice Endorsement](#) and is also published on the website. This policy will allow DPsych and combined MPsych/PhD higher degree students to apply for general registration before graduation, and after finishing the equivalent of a Master's degree (i.e. having completed all coursework and placements and sufficient progression in the thesis as to be equivalent to a Master's thesis at that institution). This policy is in line with extensive stakeholder feedback that Doctorate (DPsych, PsycD,

combined Masters/PhD) students should have general registration available to them at the same time as their peers completing the Masters, so that they are not disadvantaged from continuing in the Doctorate program. The onus is on Heads of Schools to choose whether they are able to certify early progress on a Doctorate thesis as equivalent to a Masters. The Board anticipates variation in the application of this policy between institutions to reflect differences in the structure of Doctorate programs.

The application for general registration (form AGEN-76) has altered to reflect this policy decision. An additional form (PDEC-76) has been developed for higher degree Doctorate applicants who wish to apply for early general registration and is to be submitted with the general registration form. Both of these forms are available on the Board's [website](#).

Policy matters

The Psychology Board of Australia regularly develops policies to support the implementation of the Board's standards, codes and guidelines. These policies are effective from the date of publication on the website.

The following policies have been published on the Board's website:

- policy for unsatisfactory progress in the 4+2 internship program
- policy for provisional psychologists with qualifications more than 10 years old
- policy on recency of practice requirements
- policy on recognition of prior supervised practice for approval of a registrar program
- policy for higher degree students applying for general registration

A number of minor changes have been made to the:

- policy for 4+2 Internship program: limited work roles

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.

Issue 2 of the Psychology Board of Australia's Newsletter – 'Connections' – is currently being circulated as an e-newsletter to all registrants for whom the Board has email addresses. The Board will also publish the newsletter on its website.

Calling for email addresses

AHPRA has email addresses for approximately 70% of registrants, as not all former state and territory boards collected registrant's 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, so that they can receive e-newsletters. The Board believes this is an effective – including cost effective – way of sharing information registrants about important issues for our profession.

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.

Annual registration fees

In setting its budget for the 2011/12 financial year, the Board has reviewed all registration fees in consultation with its finance and management committee and AHPRA. The Board has accepted advice to increase the fees no greater than CPI. At CPI of 3%, this means the annual fee for renewal will be \$403 from the 30 November 2011 renewal period (or \$308 for practitioners whose principal place of practice is NSW).

In consultation with the other nine Boards, the Psychology Board of Australia has approved a fee for late renewal of registration at 25% of the registration renewal fee, and approved a new Fast Track Application Fee. The fast track application was introduced this year to assist practitioners whose registration has lapsed but who wish to remain in practice. This fast-track process is open for one month after the end of the late period.

The Psychology Board of Australia previously waived the application fee for psychology provisional registration in all states and territories until 30 June 2012. The Board has confirmed this decision, to reduce the burden of fees on provisional psychologists.

The 2012 fee schedule is published on the Boards website.

Under the National Law, the Board sets its fees which are then agreed by the AHPRA Agency Management Committee through a formal health professions agreement.

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.

The Board approved the accreditation of courses at Edith Cowan University, the University of the Sunshine Coast, and the University of Queensland. The Board approved the conditional accreditation of courses at Swinburne University of Technology and at Swinburne University/ Open Universities Australia.

These courses will be added to the Board's website.

Psychology Board of Australia website

The Psychology Board of Australia, in partnership with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) and the nine other boards in the National Scheme, will soon be updating its website to make it easier to navigate and find important information. The Board's website will feature clearer menus and intuitive architecture.

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 (FAQs), fact sheets and registration standards.

Psychologists are encouraged to review these changes. More information about the Board is published at: www.psychologyboard.gov.au and practitioners are encouraged to refer to the site for news and updates on Policy and Guidelines affecting Psychologists.

Board committees

There are new requirements under the National Law for Regional Boards from 1 July 2011 (or 18 October 2011 in WA). The Board has reviewed and provided advice to the Ministers on the effective composition of the Regional Boards. From 1 July 2011, the Northern Territory has

become part of the Northern Territory, South Australia & Western Australia Board of the Psychology Board of Australia.

The following Regional 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, South Australia & Western Australia
- Queensland

Stakeholder meetings and Darwin forum

Members of the Board have been very active in meeting with local registrants and stakeholders and presenting at public meetings and universities. Presentations have been made in both public and private organisations, including health departments, the health services union, professional associations, university students and the Department of Education. Public open presentations on the National Scheme have been made in most jurisdictions.

The Board is planning its next forum to be held in the Northern Territory on Thursday 1 September 2011. Details about registering for this event are on the Board's website.

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

Professor Brin Grenyer
Chair
Psychology Board of Australia
3 August 2011