



Communiqué

19 October 2012

The Psychology Board of Australia (the Board) is established under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law). This communiqué highlights key issues from the 35th meeting of the Board on 19 October 2012. At each meeting, the Board considers a wide range of issues, many of which are routine and are not included in this communiqué.

Annual Report

AHPRA and the National Boards submitted the 2012 Annual Report to Ministers by 30 September as required by the National Law. The report, expected to be publicly released on 1 November, details the work of the National Boards and AHPRA in implementing the second year of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme. The release will be supported by the publication of a special edition of AHPRA Report. The 2012 Annual Report and AHPRA Report will both be published online.

National Psychology Exam

Tender process underway

The Board, in conjunction with AHPRA, is currently developing a national psychology examination which is intended to be implemented from 1 July 2013. The exam will support applications for general registration and provide a nationally consistent entry level standard of applied knowledge. The exam will give the public an increased level of confidence in the profession and that all registered psychologists are suitably trained and qualified.

Due to the technical nature of the examination, a select group of providers has been invited to tender for the delivery of the examination across all States and Territories, all of whom are proven and experienced with the provision of computer-based testing platforms. The tender was issued on 8 October 2012 and will remain open for approximately one month. The successful tender will be announced in December 2012 in the Board's communiqué. The introduction of the national examination is a positive move for the profession and both the Board and AHPRA are working hard to ensure the examination - including the delivery - is of the highest quality possible.

Upcoming consultation for the national psychology exam

There have already been two consultation papers (#9 and #13) regarding the curriculum and readings for the national exam. These and other information about the exam can be found on the Board's website at: www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Registration/National-Psychology-Exam.aspx.

A third consultation paper on the national psychology exam is currently in development. This consultation paper will present proposals for the practical implementation of the exam including information about the rules and policies relating to the exam, and transitional arrangements. The paper is expected to be ready for consultation in late 2012.

Please refer to the Board's monthly communiqué and website for updates on the national psychology examination project including publication of the consultation paper.

Consultation update

Review of accreditation arrangements for the psychology profession

Under the National Law the accreditation authority appointed by Health Ministers for the psychology profession is the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC). The National Law requires the 10 National Boards that joined the National Scheme in 2010 to review the arrangements for the exercise of the accreditation functions no later than 30 June 2013.

The Board has released a public consultation paper to seek feedback on the existing accreditation arrangements as part of this review. The Board's consultation paper and a report from the accreditation authority are published at: www.psychologyboard.gov.au/News/Current-Consultations.aspx. The consultation document is provided in writable PDF.

Interested persons are invited to provide feedback to the public consultation process by email to accreditationreview@ahpra.gov.au by close of business, **Friday 2 November 2012**.

APAC review of accreditation standards

APAC is undertaking a major review of the accreditation standards for the psychology profession in Australia and are currently seeking written submissions from stakeholders on the proposed new standards. Responses are due to APAC 8 December. To find out more and to read the consultation draft, visit the APAC website at www.psychologycouncil.org.au/consultations-and-projects

Guidelines for the 5+1 internship program

The Board is continuing to work on developing the draft *Guidelines for the 5+1 internship program*, with a public consultation scheduled for later in 2012.

The Board has agreed that provisional psychologists wishing to commence the sixth year internship prior to the new guidelines being finalised are permitted to apply to commence the sixth year internship in accordance with the requirements set out in the *Provisional registration standard* using the current supervised practice plan form – SPPR-10. Sixth year interns may also use the *Guidelines for 4+2 internship program: provisional psychologists and supervisors* for additional guidance on the requirements of the program until the 5+1 internship guideline becomes available. Further information on transition provisions will be published on the Board's website soon.

Review of standards and guidelines

The Psychology Board and the other National Boards that have been part of the National Scheme since 2010 have agreed to review registration standards and guidelines at least every three years; therefore review of many of the Board's standards and guidelines is due to commence by 30 June 2013.

The National Boards have commenced preparations for the reviews and practitioners, members of the public and other stakeholders will be able to provide feedback during the public consultation phases of the reviews in 2013. Where registration standards, guidelines and codes are common to all, or most, of the National Boards, the consultation phase will be coordinated across National Boards to make providing feedback easier.

Consultation is expected to occur over several stages, starting in 2013. The consultations are being staged (rather than happening simultaneously) to give stakeholders a better opportunity to provide feedback. Information about the reviews will be included in forthcoming communiqués and on the website as they commence.

The first of these public consultation papers is intended to be a combined consultation for the *Guidelines for advertising of regulated health services*, the new *Social media policy*, the *Guidelines for mandatory notifications*, and endorsement of the *Code of Ethics*.

New consultation papers will be published on the website www.psychologyboard.gov.au/News/Current-Consultations.aspx and notice of new consultations published in the Board's communiqué.

Registration renewal due 30 November 2012 for all psychologists with general or non-practicing registration

About 26,000 psychologists across Australia are due to renew their registration by 30 November 2012.

The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) has been sending a series of emails to psychologists, for whom an email address is known, reminding them to renew their registration with the Psychology Board of Australia (the Board).

Psychologists who wish to renew their registration should renew before 30 November to avoid a late fee. The quickest and easiest way to renew registration is to use the secure online renewal service. Simply visit the website at www.psychologyboard.gov.au and use your User ID to log in to online renewal. If you do not have your User ID, complete an online enquiry form, selecting 'User ID' as the category of enquiry or by calling 1300 419 495.

The responsibility to renew registration on time rests with the individual practitioner. There will be a [late fee](#) applied to psychologists who do not apply to renew by the due date, but who apply to renew within one calendar month of expiry (the 'late renewal period' permitted under the National Law). Those who do not apply to renew within one month of their registration expiry date must, under the National Law, be removed from the register and make a new application for registration if they wish to continue to practise.

Psychologists who do not want to renew their registration can simply ignore the reminders from AHPRA or go online to 'opt out' of renewing. This new online facility will provide the Board and AHPRA with better data on the number of psychologists who choose to opt out of renewing their registration, to distinguish them from individuals who intend to renew, but do not do so on time. Using the 'opt out' service puts a stop to renewal reminders.

Updating your contact details, including email address

The Board encourages practitioners to provide their current email address to AHPRA by updating their contact details online when renewing registration. This will enable the Board to send e-newsletters and other important information for the profession, and assist AHPRA to contact practitioners about important registration or renewal information in an efficient and cost effective way.

Online graduate applications

Individuals who have completed or are about to complete an accredited fourth year psychology course can now apply online for provisional registration as a psychologist. This new function helps smooth the path from undergraduate study to postgraduate training as a provisional psychologist.

Students and graduates are eligible to use the service if they intend to continue training to become a psychologist and require provisional registration to undertake the fifth and sixth years of psychology training through one of the three approved pathways (4+2, 5+1 or higher degree) leading to General registration as a psychologist.

Applicants need to know which pathway – 4+2, 5+1 or higher degree - they will be undertaking at the time they apply. After applying online, applicants need to mail their supporting documentation to AHPRA which must include either a supervised practice plan for applicants for the 4+2 pathway, or evidence of enrolment in an accredited Doctorate, Masters, or Graduate Diploma of Professional Psychology for applicants in the higher degree or 5+1 pathway.

To become a registered provisional psychologist, eligible students must also meet the National Board's registration requirements relating to criminal history, English language skills and professional indemnity insurance. Visit the Board's website and check the requirements for provisional registration before you apply for provisional registration.

Find out how to use the Graduate Online service by accessing the information at www.ahpra.gov.au under [Graduate Applications](#).

Psychology Board of Australia website

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 at: www.psychologyboard.gov.au.

The Board has recently published its September registration statistics. The data includes information about types of registration held, principal place of practice, endorsements, registrant age and gender. The psychology profession continues to grow and there are now 29,868 registered psychologists in Australia.

The Board has also published its second set of psychology supervisor statistics. The data shows that over 500 new supervisors have been approved since March 2012. Also included is new data showing a break-down by jurisdiction of the individual supervisors who are approved to provide supervision to provisional psychologists and/or registrars.

All the Board's statistics can be found on the website at:
www.psychologyboard.gov.au/About/Statistics.aspx

Accreditation matters

Under section 49 of the National Law, the National Board 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.

There were no programs before the Board for approval at this meeting of the Board. The list of Board-approved courses is published on the Board's website.

Stakeholder meetings

Members of the National Board continue to be very active in meeting with local registrants and stakeholders and presenting at public meetings and universities.

The Board and representatives of the Board have recently had ongoing conversations with various universities and students, health and education departments, and at psychology professional society meetings.

Recent presentations include a session at the recent APS Conference in Perth which provided attendees with information about the Psychology Board, the Board's projects, and legal and ethical issues.

Community engagement forums

As part of the community engagement strategy for all National Boards, a partnership has been established with the Consumer Health Forum of Australia (CHF) to engage with health consumers and the broader community. CHF is the national peak body representing the interests of Australian healthcare consumers.

A series of state-level community forums have been scheduled providing an opportunity to brief members from the community (non practitioners) on how health practitioner regulation works and what it offers the community.

Forums have already been held in Sydney and Brisbane. Forums in Melbourne, Darwin and Adelaide are planned for November, followed by forums in Canberra and Hobart in December.

A webinar is being held at 11am – 12.30pm on 22 November for those who wish to participate but can't attend in person.

To RSVP, please contact CHF on (02) 6273 5444 or info@chf.org.au.

More information about the forums will be published on the AHPRA website shortly.

Call for expressions of interest for regional board positions

Nominations and expressions of interest are currently being sought for the following board member vacancies:

- New South Wales Board of the Psychology Board of Australia – psychologist member, and
- ACT/Tasmania/Victoria Board of the Psychology Board of Australia – Victorian psychologist member.

For more information visit the website at www.ahpra.gov.au/Health-Professions/Board-member-recruitment.aspx

Professor Brin Grenyer

Chair

Psychology Board of Australia

31 October 2012