



Communiqué

16 November 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 36th meeting of the Board on 16 November 2012. At each meeting, the Board considers a wide range of issues, many of which are routine and are not included in this 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. Psychologists should renew before 30 November to avoid a [late fee](#).

There are still 9,840 psychologists who have not renewed their registration.

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).

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.

Psychologists who do not want to renew their registration can simply ignore the reminders from AHPRA or go online to 'opt out' of renewing. Opting out is a new online service allowing psychologists who no longer wish to practice or be registered in Australia to stop receiving registration renewal reminders. It also provides 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.

Provisional registration renewal

Under section 64(3) of the National Law provisional registration may not be renewed more than twice.

Therefore provisional psychologists who have already renewed twice since the beginning of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (in 2010 and 2011) must make a new application for registration.

The Board has approved a streamlined application form for this process; provisional psychologists who have a registration expiry date of 31 December 2012 and who have already renewed twice will receive their application form in the post soon.

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 registration renewal reminders, e-newsletters and other important information for the profession, and assist AHPRA to contact practitioners with important information in an efficient and cost effective way.

Psychologists can update their details online when renewing registration, or at any other time by logging in to [Your Account](#) via the website, or by phoning AHPRA on 1300 419 495.

Annual Report

AHPRA and the National Boards submitted the 2011/2012 Annual Report to Ministers by 30 September as required by the National Law and the report was publicly released on 1 November 2012. The Annual Report details the work of the National Boards and AHPRA in implementing the second year of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme. A special edition of AHPRA Report was also released on 1 November; both are published online: www.ahpra.gov.au/News/2012-11-01-annual-report.aspx

Newsletter

The Board has recently released Issue 6 of the *Connections* newsletter. *Connections* was emailed to all psychologists who have provided their email address to AHPRA, and is also published on the Board's website - www.psychologyboard.gov.au/News/Newsletters.aspx.

Policy update

Policy for applicants for general registration who hold overseas qualifications

The Board has revised its *Policy for applicants for general registration who hold overseas qualifications* regarding the requirements for overseas qualifications assessed as equivalent to a five year sequence of study in psychology in Australia.

The revised policy is published at www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Standards-and-Guidelines/Codes-Guidelines-Policies.aspx under 'General policies'.

In the upcoming consultation on the National Psychology Examination, the Board will seek feedback on the requirement for overseas practitioners to undertake a transitional program and pass the examination from 30 June 2013. The Board may undertake further review of this policy in 2013.

Transition provisions for 5+1 internship programs

The Board approved a fact sheet on transition provisions for 5+1 internship program which has been published on the website at www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Registration/Supervision.aspx.

Provisional psychologist who have completed a Graduate Diploma of Professional Psychology are permitted to begin their sixth year internship in accordance with the requirements of the 5+1 internship program set out the *Provisional registration standard* and using the application and reporting forms used for 4+2 internship programs.

5+1 provisional psychologists may also refer to the *Guidelines for 4+2 internship programs* for additional guidance. A Guideline for the 5+1 internship programs will be published in 2013.

Policy on applications for an extension to complete the requirements for area of practice endorsement under transition provisions

The Board has agreed to update its *Policy on applications for an extension to complete the requirements for area of practice endorsement under transition provisions*.

The amendment will allow psychologists who completed an accredited Masters degree between 1 July 2005 and 30 June 2010 and are now undertaking a Psychology Board of Australia Registrar Program to apply for a six month extension to complete the program and apply for the endorsement. The updated policy will be published on the Board's website soon.

Policy for higher degree students applying for general registration

The Board has amended its *Policy for higher degree students applying for general registration* to clarify the requirements for progression with the doctoral thesis to be eligible to apply for general registration. The updated policy and statement of assessment form (PDEC-76) will be published on the website soon.

Expression of interest for the National Psychology Examination Committee

In November 2010 the Psychology Board appointed the inaugural National Psychology Examination Committee for a period of one year, which was renewed for a further year. The Board is very grateful to members for their outstanding contribution to the committee, which concludes November 2012.

The Psychology Board of Australia now invites senior, experienced psychologists to express an interest in being on the National Psychology Examination Committee commencing February 2013.

The Committee consists of nine members of the profession and includes members of the Psychology Board of Australia and members appointed through this expression of interest.

The examination is being developed to support applications for general registration following an internship and to ensure a consistent professional standard of psychologists nationally and is due to begin on 1 July 2013. Committee members are required to meet six times during 2013, over two full days on Friday and Saturday (or other two days) in Sydney. The Board will cover expenses associated with attending meetings and pay a sitting fee. The role and function of the committee is to work to an agreed set of tasks identified by the Board, which include:

- to develop the National Psychology Examination multiple-choice questions
- to contribute to the development of the curriculum
- to work on testing and refreshing examination items on an ongoing basis
- to monitor the progress of the examination roll-out and implementation across Australia
- to review and provide input into drafts of consultations and policy documents
- to work with other Board working parties and committees as required, and
- to assist AHPRA staff and the Chair with specific projects and requests.

Expertise is required in the following areas:

- a) ethical, legal and professional matters
- b) psychological assessment and measurement
- c) intervention strategies d) communication skills, and
- d) multiple-choice exam theory and statistics

Expressions of interest are due by **5pm on Monday 3 December 2012**. The Board will select the committee from the applicants at its meeting in December. Appointment is for two years with possibility of renewal for a further term. If you are interested, please submit a one-page expression of interest, outlining your expertise in one (or more) of the areas above, and a CV with contact details and two referees, to the Chair, Psychology Board of Australia (psychologychair@ahpra.gov.au).

Tender process underway for the National Psychology Exam

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 was 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 the tender period has now closed. The tenders are now being considered and it is anticipated that the successful tender will be announced in the Board's in December communiqué this year.

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.

Consultation update

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 public consultation in early 2013. Please refer to the Board's monthly communiqué and website for updates on the national psychology examination project including publication of the consultation paper.

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 undertook a public consultation on this matter which closed on 2 November 2012. The Board received 25 submissions from a range of organisations and individuals and these are currently being reviewed.

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 no later than 5pm (EST) on 8 December 2012. To find out more and to read the consultation draft, visit the APAC website at www.psychologycouncil.org.au/consultations-and-projects

APAC intends to release a second set of draft standards, concerned with the specialised components of professional postgraduate programs of education intended to qualify graduates for entry into an Area of Practice Endorsement Registrar Program, in late February 2013.

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 early 2013.

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 is available in the fact sheet [Transition provisions for 5+1 internship program](#).

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 will 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*, the new *Social media policy*, the *Guidelines for mandatory notifications*, and endorsement of the *APS 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.

Guidelines for supervisors and supervisor training programs

The Board has approved the final draft of the new *Guidelines for supervisors and supervisor training providers* and the guideline is now being prepared for publication.

The Supervisor Training Working Party is now working on developing an Expressions of Interest process for providers of supervisor training programs and more information will be available in 2013.

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.

At this meeting the Board approved the APAC accreditation of courses from:

- Curtin University
- Australian National University
- Charles Darwin University
- Australian College of Applied Psychology
- RMIT University
- Edith Cowan University
- Flinders University in partnership with HELP University College (Malaysia)
- Macquarie University
- University of New England
- University of Sydney
- University of Wollongong
- James Cook University (Singapore Campus)
- University of Ballarat
- Swinburne University, and
- University of Adelaide.

The updated list of Board-approved qualifications will be published soon on the Board's website at: www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Accreditation.aspx.

An online search for approved psychology courses is currently being developed and will be publicly available soon.

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 stakeholder events included the NSW Psychology Council Annual Meeting and the College of Clinical Neuropsychologists Annual Conference.

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.

Upcoming forums will be held in:

- Adelaide - 30 November 2012
- Hobart - 6 December 2012
- Canberra - 10 December 2012, and
- an online webinar will be scheduled in 2013 (details to follow).

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

More information about the forums is also published on the AHPRA website at www.ahpra.gov.au/News/2012-11-12-media-release.aspx.

Professor Brin Grenyer

Chair

Psychology Board of Australia

26 November 2012