

Dear Chairperson,

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the consultation process regarding the proposed National Psychology Exam.

I am a current candidate in a Combined PhD/Master of Psychology(Clinical) program. I commenced this four year program in February 2013, hence I am due to complete the course in March 2017.

Given that this completion date falls after the exam exemption deadline imposed by AHPRA of mid-2016 for students completing postgraduate degrees in psychology, I am faced with the prospect of undertaking the exam when I apply for general registration at the conclusion of my program in 2017. This is despite the fact that I will be completing the same clinical masters coursework and placements as my peers currently enrolled in a masters-only degree, who will graduate and apply for registration before mid-2016 and thus will not be required to undertake this exam.

The inconvenience and expense of sitting an exam my peers are not required to sit, despite us having completed the same coursework and placements, which (as noted in the paragraph on 'exemptions' in the consultation paper) are currently considered by the Psychology Board of Australia part of an accredited degree program that meets the Board's standard for registration, is not equitable and represents a significant and unfair disadvantage.

An alternative solution which would fairly address this problem would be to offer an exemption from the exam for all students currently undertaking accredited masters, PhD/masters and doctoral programs leading to registration (i.e. enrolled in such a program in 2013).

This would change the exam requirement and deadline from a retrospective to a prospective requirement, and would be more equitable.

Students enrolled in combined Masters/PhD programs work hard to develop their research skills and, in training as both clinicians and researchers, provide an extremely valuable contribution to the profession of psychology. It is disappointing that the proposed arrangement would disadvantage those of us enrolled in combined programs, as as a profession we should aim to encourage as many students and psychologists as possible to become highly skilled in research as well as practice.

Thank you for your consideration of my submission.

Yours sincerely,