

History of the examination

Background on the implementation planning of the National Psychology Examination prior to 1 July 2013

The planning for a national psychology examination has a rich history in Australia. Below is a summary timeline showing the development of the National Psychology Examination, which began in 1986.

Year	Action
1986	All psychology registration boards in Australia (with their New Zealand counterpart) resolved to develop a national examination, with a particular focus on using it to test overseas psychologists applying for registration in Australia
1987	Consideration was given to a budget to finance the development of a national examination system
1990	A national examination system was approved in principle
2007	Determined to instigate a process to develop options for a national examination, including that a working party be established to explore a national examination proposal and report by March 2008 Ministers of Health determined to continue supporting the unaccredited two-year internship pathway to general registration
2008	The New South Wales Psychology Board issued a consultation paper on the development of a national psychology examination for public comment Feedback and further consultations with key stakeholder groups at that time indicated strong support for the development of the examination
2009	An update on the examination project was presented and made subject to peer review by all state and territory boards, representatives from the Australian Psychological Society and Heads of Departments and Schools of Psychology Association An update on the status of the examination was published (Grenyer, B.F.S. (2009). Development of a national psychology examination. <i>InPsych: Bulletin of the Australian Psychological Society</i> , 32 (3), 13)
2010	Early in 2010 the NSW Board, prior to the National Scheme, approved funds to help support the initial development of the examination The registration standard for general registration (which includes that the Board may require the passing of an examination) was approved by Ministerial Council and came into effect on 1 July 2010 with the introduction of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme In September 2010 the Psychology Board of Australia approved the appointment process for a National Psychology Examination Panel

2011	<p>In February the Psychology Board of Australia announced the National Psychology Examination Panel and that it had held its first meetings, in its communiqué, stating: <i>'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.'</i></p> <p>In March the Board announced in its communiqué: <i>'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 from 1 July 2013 for applicants seeking general registration.'</i></p> <p>In April the Board released the first public consultation papers on the development of the National Psychology Examination</p> <p>In November the Board released the <i>draft National Psychology Examination curriculum</i> for public consultation</p> <p>In November the Board also published its third newsletter to registrants which provided an update on the curriculum consultation process and stated: <i>The Board has determined that from 1 July 2013 a National Psychology Examination will apply to provisional psychologists who are in the supervised practice pathway to general registration (4+2 and 5+1) to be sat in their sixth and final year of training before applying for general registration. It is intended that the exam will also apply to overseas applicants and practitioners returning to practice after lengthy periods without practising, or where there are concerns about practice... Persons applying for general registration before 1 July 2013 will not be required to sit the examination.</i></p> <p>Over the period of February to November, the Board held seven public consultation forums across states and territories that included information about the examination commencing 1 July 2013</p>
2012	<p>Four further public consultation forums held over 12 months</p> <p>In March the final curriculum for the examination, based on stakeholder feedback, was approved by the Board and published on the website</p> <p>In July the Board tested draft questions for the National Psychology Examination and undertook statistical analysis of their reliability and validity, which provided the basis for further question development and improvement</p> <p>In August 2012 the Board published its fifth newsletter to all registrants, which included the following information on the examination: <i>'General registration as a psychologist requires six years of training, but at present there are multiple pathways to achieve that training. The 5th and 6th years of training, during which professional practice skills of psychologists are required, are currently provided by both accredited and unaccredited training options. The proposed National Psychology Examination will test the application of psychological knowledge gained in these years and the focus will be on testing applied psychological knowledge and judgement which form the basis of competence in the profession. The National Psychology Examination is a mechanism for measurement of a minimum level of applied professional knowledge of psychology and competence that is acceptable for general registration in the profession in order to ensure the protection of the public.'</i></p> <p>In October the Board initiated a tender process for providers of computer based testing to provide the platform for administering the examination within confidential test centres and environments in each state and territory. The successful tender was announced in December.</p> <p>In December the Board appointed a new nine member National Examination Committee</p>
2013	<p>In February the new National Examination Committee met for the first time.</p> <p>In April, the Board released the <i>draft Guidelines for the National Psychology Examination</i> for public consultation.</p> <p>Also in April, the Board made available new resources on the examination, including example examination questions and additional curriculum and reading resources</p> <p>From 1 July 2013, the National Psychology Exam came into effect.</p>