



## Public consultation

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**28 April 2014**

### Consultation paper 22: requirements for general registration, continuing professional development and recency of practice for psychologists

You are invited to provide feedback on a review of the following registration standards and supporting documents:

- General registration standard
- Continuing professional development registration standard
- Guidelines for continuing professional development
- Recency of practice registration standard, and
- Policy on recency of practice requirements

You are invited to provide feedback on any or all of the documents in this public consultation paper. Please provide your feedback in a Word document (or equivalent)<sup>1</sup> by email to [psychconsultation@ahpra.gov.au](mailto:psychconsultation@ahpra.gov.au) by close of business on **30 June 2014**.

#### Public consultation

The Psychology Board of Australia (the Board) is releasing the attached consultation paper on the review of the *General registration standard*, *Continuing professional development registration standard*, *Guidelines for continuing professional development*, *Recency of practice registration standard*, and *Policy for recency of practice requirements*. You are invited to provide your comments on the consultation paper, including the questions in the paper, by 30 June 2014.

#### How your submission will be treated

Submissions will generally be published unless you request otherwise. The Board publishes submissions on its website to encourage discussion and inform the community and stakeholders. However, the Board retains the right not to publish submissions at their discretion, and will not place on their website, or make available to the public, submissions that contain offensive or defamatory comments or which are outside the scope of the consultation.

Before publication, the Boards may remove personally-identifying information from submissions, including contact details. The views expressed in the submissions are those of the individuals or organisations who submit them and their publication does not imply any acceptance of, or agreement with, these views by the Boards.

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<sup>1</sup> You are welcome to supply a PDF file of your feedback in addition to the Word (or equivalent) file, however we request that you do supply a text or word file. As part of an effort to meet international website accessibility guidelines, AHPRA and National Boards are striving to publish documents in accessible formats (such as Word), in addition to PDFs. More information about this is available at [www.ahpra.gov.au/About-AHPRA/Accessibility.aspx](http://www.ahpra.gov.au/About-AHPRA/Accessibility.aspx).

The Boards also accept submissions made in confidence. These submissions will not be published on the website or elsewhere. Submissions may be confidential because they include personal experiences or other sensitive information. Any request for access to a confidential submission will be determined in accordance with the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cwlth), which has provisions designed to protect personal information and information given in confidence.

Please let the Board know if you do not want your submission published, or want all or part of it treated as confidential.

# Consultation paper 22: requirements for general registration, continuing professional development and recency of practice for psychologists

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# Overview of consultation 22

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General registration standard

Continuing professional development registration standard

Guidelines for continuing professional development

Recency of practice registration standard

Policy on recency of practice requirements

## Background

The Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act (the National Law) as in force in each state and territory requires National Boards to develop and recommend to the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council (the Ministerial Council)<sup>2</sup> registration standards about matters, including the:

- requirements for continuing professional development for registered health practitioners registered in the profession, and
- requirements in relation to the nature, extent, period and recency of any previous practice of the profession by applicants for registration in the profession.

Prior to the commencement of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme), the Board developed the *Continuing professional development registration standard* and the *Recency of practice registration standard* which were recommended to the Ministerial Council. The Ministerial Council approved both standards on 31 March 2010 with approval taking effect from 1 July 2010.

Additionally, National Boards may develop and recommend to the Ministerial Council registration standards about other matters including:

- matters relevant to the eligibility of individuals for registration in the profession.

Prior to the commencement of the National Scheme, the Board also developed the *General registration standard* that sets out the requirements for general registration in the profession. This standard was also recommended to the Ministerial Council and approved on 31 March 2010 with approval taking effect from 1 July 2010.

To supplement the requirements set out in the National Law and the registration standards for continuing professional development and recency of practice, the Board has developed the *Guidelines for continuing professional development* and a *Policy for recency of practice requirements*.

These standard and guidelines were all scheduled for review at least every three years, in keeping with good regulatory practice. The Board commenced the review process for all these documents in 2013 and has undertaken detailed research, development, and preliminary consultation. The Board is now seeking wider comment on the proposed amendments to the standards, guideline and policy.

## Purpose of the proposal

The Board is inviting general comments on its draft revised registration standards, guideline and policy. There is an overview before each proposed draft that explains the proposed changes. There are also specific questions about the registration standards, guideline and policy which you may wish to address in your response.

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<sup>2</sup> The Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council comprising Ministers of the governments of the participating jurisdictions (eight states and territories) and the Commonwealth with portfolio responsibility for health.

The role of the Psychology Board is to work with AHPRA and other National Boards to achieve the objectives of the National Scheme in accordance with the guiding principles of the National Scheme.

Every Board decision must be in accordance with the objectives and guiding principles of the National Scheme. The first consideration in every Board decision is the health and safety of the Australian public and all actions taken by the Board must fall within the functions assigned to National Boards under the National Law. Board decisions often need to find a balance between two objectives or principles, such as facilitating high quality education and training of health practitioners while ensuring that the standards are not set impossibly high so as to inhibit the continuous development of the workforce to meet the demands of the public for psychological services.

The relevant sections of the National Law are included in [Appendix 2](#) for easy reference. Please take a few minutes to read them and take them into account when providing your feedback.

### Next steps

The Board will consider the feedback from this consultation and decide whether to further revise the documents.

In accordance with sections 12 and 38 of the National Law the Board must develop and recommend registration standards to the Ministerial Council for approval. Therefore once the proposed content of the three registration standards included in this consultation paper is finalised following public consultation, the Board will seek Ministerial Council's approval of the standards.

# Review of the General registration standard

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## Summary of issue

The National Law allows the Board to develop a registration standard about eligibility requirements relevant to individuals for registration in the profession. The *General registration standard* details these requirements and is part of the regulatory framework for the psychology profession.

General registration is available to psychologists who meet the eligibility requirements under [section 52](#) of the National Law. General registration as a psychologist enables an individual to work in any area of psychology within their scope of competence and use the protected title 'Psychologist'. All psychologists with general registration meet a minimum standard of education and training and have been assessed as a suitable person to hold general registration in the profession.

The Board is reviewing its *General registration standard* to ensure it is based on the best available evidence, meets the objectives of the National Law, and is worded as simply and clearly as possible

## Options statement – general registration standard

The Board has considered two main options in developing this proposal.

### Option 1 – Status quo

Option 1 would continue to approve the current registration standard with no changes.

The current *General registration standard* is published on the Board's website, accessible from [www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Standards-and-Guidelines/Registration-Standards.aspx](http://www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Standards-and-Guidelines/Registration-Standards.aspx).

### Option 2 – Proposed revised standard

Option 2 would involve the Board submitting a revised registration standard to the Ministerial Council for approval. A revised registration standard would continue to establish the Board's requirements for general registration with some improvements, including clarification of the language and structure to make it easier to understand.

The Board does not propose to change the minimum standard of education and training for general registration at this stage. The Board will reconsider the minimum standards in the future in consultation with government, workforce, the accreditation authority, higher education institutions, and the profession. Currently the six year standard is providing a good balance between rigorous training that produces suitably trained and qualified practitioners who are able to practise competently and ethically, and meeting public demand for psychology services with a flexible, responsive and sustainable psychology workforce.

The proposed revised standard retains the requirement for a six year sequence of education and training in one of four pathways:

- Higher degree pathway
- 5+1 internship pathway
- 4+2 internship pathway
- Substantial equivalence pathway for overseas trained applicants

### Preferred option

The Board prefers Option 2.

## Discussion of proposed amendments

A number of matters that the Board would particularly like to highlight with regard to amending the *General registration standard* are discussed below. Comments and feedback on any or all of these matters is sought. Feedback on any other issues, or ideas for the standard not specifically discussed, but which are within the scope of this consultation, would also be most welcome.

### Replacing the term 'Masters'

The Board proposes to replace the term 'Masters' which is found in the current version of the *General registration standard* with '6 years of training'. This recognises that the new Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), for which universities must be compliant by 2015, defines qualifications by levels, rather than titles.

The suggested replacement term allows better alignment with the AQF and removes potential for misunderstanding of the Board's intention. In future, there is expected to be a variety of Masters qualifications of varying AQF level and years of training, which may create contestable inconsistencies in application of the Board's standard. For example a qualification at fifth year level could be titled 'Masters' but it would not be recognised as fifth and sixth year level training for the purpose of general registration.

### Qualification for registration and eligibility for registration

The minimum qualification requirement for registration as a psychologist in Australia is an approved sequence of formal tertiary study to fourth year level, such as an accredited Bachelor degree with Honours. The minimum qualification requirement is the same for both provisional and general registration, as [section 62\(1\)\(a\)](#) of the National Law specifies that an individual is eligible for provisional registration if the individual is qualified for general registration (and meets other suitability requirements set out in the National Law).

Eligibility for general registration is a broader requirement in that the individual is not only qualified for general registration but has also successfully completed any period of supervised practice, examination, or assessment required by the registration standard. In accordance with this standard, eligibility for general registration requires completion of a minimum six-year sequence of education and training, and an exam. The six-year sequence comprises two distinct stages: completion of the four year qualification, followed by a fifth and sixth year of further training and supervised practice.

The proposed revisions to the *General registration standard* retain the requirement for a six-year sequence of education and training, and set out the two stages of training more clearly by first specifying the minimum qualification requirement for registration in accordance with [section 53](#) of the National Law, and then the eligibility requirements for registration in accordance with [section 52](#) of the National Law.

The final two years of training at fifth and sixth year focus on the practical application of psychology and the Board recognises four different options for meeting this eligibility requirement. The proposed new format for the *General registration standard* sets out this information more clearly.

The standard pathway for completing the two-year program of further training and supervised practice at fifth and sixth year is the higher degree pathway by which the individual completes an accredited psychology higher degree that includes coursework, supervised practical placements, and a research thesis while registered as a provisional psychologist.

The Board also recognises the following alternative pathways for meeting the fifth and sixth year requirements:

- a combination of an accredited fifth year qualification followed by an approved one year internship (5+1); or
- an approved two year internship (4+2); or
- qualifications and/or supervised practice completed overseas that are substantially equivalent to an Australian accredited degree at fifth and sixth year.

In addition to education, training and assessment there are other eligibility requirements which are 'fitness to practise' requirements. The current *General registration standard* simply states the applicant 'must meet the eligibility requirements of the legislation, including any registration standard set by the Board'. The proposed new standard includes the specific detail of the eligibility requirements of the legislation – see a) and b) under *Eligibility requirements* in the standard on [page 8](#) if this consultation paper. It also includes specific reference to the mandatory registration standards required by the legislation ([section 38](#)) and the web page where the standards are published. This change is intended to make it much easier for an applicant to find out and understand what is required of them to be eligible for registration.

### **Overseas trained psychologists**

The proposed revised standard is more user-friendly for overseas trained applicants. Currently the relevant section for overseas applicants states 'another qualification that in the Board's opinion is substantially equivalent' without being clear that it refers to overseas qualifications. This section has also been updated to specify that both postgraduate qualifications and supervised practice completed overseas (such as for an overseas registration board) may be considered when assessing substantial equivalence at fifth and sixth year. The requirement for a transitional program for overseas trained applicants is also included in this section as it will generally be considered together with overseas training to determine if it is substantially equivalent to Australian training, including legal, ethical, and cultural competencies that are unique to the Australian context.

Together with reference to the examination and the other registration standards required under [section 38](#), this revision has ensured that the standard includes enough information to make the applicant aware of the key requirements they need to find out more about, without being excessively detailed.

### **Definitions**

The Board proposes to include a new definitions section in the *General registration standard* which clarifies the key requirements for general registration including definitions of 'qualification' and 'accredited sequence of study'. The Board also proposes to include detail of what must be achieved in the internship programs and the transitional program in order to be recognised as having successfully completed the program.

In addition to including more detail about the requirements for each of the pathways to general registration, it is proposed to include less detail in the body of the *Provisional registration standard*. Both the general and provisional standards would primarily focus on the entry requirements for that registration type.

The proposed changes to the *Provisional registration standard* will be released for consultation soon together with a draft revised *Guidelines for the 4+2 internship program*. The definition of 'successful completion of a Board-approved 4+2 internship program' in the proposed revised *General registration standard* is based on the proposed requirements for the program set out in the new 4+2 guideline that is currently being finalised for consultation. Should public consultation suggest any significant changes to the requirements in the *Provisional registration standard* and/or the *Guidelines for the 4+2 internship program*, corresponding amendment to the *General registration standard* may also be necessary.

### **The National Psychology Examination**

The option to require an applicant to sit an examination prior to applying for general registration has been included in *General registration standard* since it first came into effect on 1 July 2010. Since that time the Board has implemented its national psychology examination which contributes to ensuring a consistent minimum standard for entry to general registration as a psychologist.

It is proposed to update the *General registration standard* to state the specific exam that is required rather than 'an examination' and remove any ambiguity about what is required. Additionally, the original standard stated that 'the Board may require the passing of the examination' whereas the proposed revised standard states that 'the individual must provide evidence of having passed the National Psychology Examination' which makes it clearer that this is a standard requirement. It is

intended that this clarification will be helpful for applicants in understanding what is required of them, and will reduce instances of applications that must be refused because the applicant has not met the eligibility requirements.

There is currently an exemption from sitting the exam for higher degree pathway applicants for general registration until 30 June 2016. The Board will review the exemption before 2016 and will consult with the profession and the community. It is proposed that the revised *General registration standard* will include provision for exemption from the exam but will not detail specific exemptions as these are set out in the *Guidelines for the National Psychology Examination*. Therefore any change to the examination requirements for higher degree candidates in the future will not affect the registration standard. If the exemption for higher degree candidates is removed after 30 June 2016, the specification '(unless exempt)' will continue apply to applicants under the Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Act who hold current practicing certificate with the New Zealand Psychologists Board.

### **Review timeframes**

When the Board developed its suite of registration standards and guidelines in 2010 it agreed that it would review its standards, code, guidelines and policies every three years. Three years was considered an appropriate timeframe as it was felt that the review of the suite of completely new standards and guidelines should happen as early as possible, while still allowing the new requirements to be sufficiently tested through two full renewal cycles after the transitional period.

Moving forward it is expected that less regular review will be sufficient as the Board's standards and other publications are refined and improved. The Board has a responsibility to ensure efficient and effective operation of the scheme which is fully funded by registration fees. This includes maintaining a balance between regular reviews of registration requirements in accordance with good regulatory practice and ensuring that resources are not overcommitted to cyclical review of Board publications. The review period must be sufficient for proposals to be well researched, for a rigorous and wide-ranging consultation process including appropriate consultation with government, and for new publications to be sufficiently tested in practice before they are reviewed again. The Board believes that a five year review cycle would achieve this balance.

Therefore the Board proposes that the next review of the *General registration standard* will commence within five years of implementation of a revised standard following this current review. However if the new five year review timeframe is adopted, the Board may still review the *General registration standard* earlier if necessary to ensure its continued relevance and workability in a changing regulatory environment.

### **Potential benefits and costs of the proposals**

The benefits of the preferred option are that the draft revised standard:

- is more flexible and user-friendly
- strikes a better balance between protecting the public and impact on applicants, and
- has been reworded to be simpler and clearer.

The costs of the preferred option are:

- applicants, other stakeholders, AHPRA and National Boards will need to become familiar with the new standard, and
- there may need to be a period of transition to the proposed revised standard, if approved.

### **Estimated impacts of the draft revised registration standards**

The changes proposed in the draft revised registrations are relatively small, although more significant changes may be proposed through consultation. There is little impact anticipated on practitioners, business and other stakeholders arising from the changes currently proposed.

## Relevant sections of the National Law

Sections [38](#), [52](#) and [53](#)

### General questions for consideration

The Board invites feedback on the following questions:

- From your perspective, how is the current registration standard working?
- Is the content and structure of the draft revised registration standard helpful, clear, relevant and more workable than the current standard?
- Is there any content that needs to be changed or deleted in the revised draft registration standard?
- Is there anything missing that needs to be added to the revised draft registration standard?
- Do you have any other comments on the revised registration draft standard?

### Attachment

The Board's Statement of assessment against AHPRA's *Procedures for development of registration standards and COAG principles for best practice regulation* is at [Appendix1](#).

# Registration standard: General registration

Effective from: <<date>>

Review date: <<date>>

## Summary

This registration standard sets out the Psychology Board of Australia's requirements for the general registration of psychologists. General registration as a psychologist may be granted to individuals who meet requirements set out in this registration standard and the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory ('the National Law').

## Does this standard apply to me?

This standard applies to all applicants for general registration and applicants for renewal of general registration as a psychologist.

## Qualification requirements

The minimum qualification required to be qualified to apply for general registration is:

- a) a four-year accredited sequence of study in psychology that has been approved by the Board as providing a qualification for registration in the profession, that has been completed within the last ten years, or
- b) a qualification that in the Board's opinion is substantially equivalent to a).

## Eligibility requirements

In order to apply for general registration, in addition to being qualified, applicants must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- a) the individual must be a suitable person to hold general registration as a psychologist under the National Law
- b) the individual must not be disqualified under the National Law, or the law of a co-regulatory jurisdiction, from applying for registration, or being registered, in the psychology profession
- c) the individual must meet all other requirements stated in an approved registration standard for the psychology profession that apply to general registration<sup>3</sup>
- d) the individual must provide evidence of having passed the National Psychology Examination (unless exempt)<sup>4</sup>
- e) the individual must have successfully completed a Board-approved supervised practice and training program while registered as a provisional psychologist. The Board has determined that the supervised practice program requirement must be met by successfully completing one of the following:

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<sup>3</sup> Refer to section 38(1)(a)-(e) of the National Law and the Psychology Board of Australia's registration standards [www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Standards-and-Guidelines/Registration-Standards.aspx](http://www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Standards-and-Guidelines/Registration-Standards.aspx)

<sup>4</sup> Refer to the Psychology Board of Australia's *Guidelines for the National Psychology Examination*

- i. a Board-approved postgraduate qualification accredited as a fifth and sixth year of study, or
- ii. all fifth and sixth year-level coursework and practicum of a Board-approved postgraduate qualification accredited as a fifth, sixth and seventh year of study and having made sufficient progress in the research thesis, or
- iii. a Board-approved qualification accredited as a fifth year of study followed by successful completion of a Board-approved 5+1 internship program<sup>5</sup>, or
- iv. a Board-approved 4+2 internship program<sup>6</sup>, or
- v. an overseas qualification and supervised practice assessed by the Board as substantially equivalent to either i), iii), or iv) and successful completion of a Board-approved transitional program (unless exempt).

## Authority

This registration standard was approved by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council on <<date>>.

Registration standards are developed under section 38 of the National Law and are subject to wide ranging consultation.

## Definitions

**Accredited sequence of study** means a program of study, comprising one or more qualifications that have been assessed by the accreditation authority for the profession as meeting the requirements of accreditation standards developed and approved under Part 6 of the National Law, and subsequently approved by the Board as providing a qualification for the purposes of registration in the psychology profession.

**Board** means the Psychology Board of Australia established under section 31 of the National Law.

**National Law** means the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law as in force in each state and territory in Australia.

**Qualification** means a formal qualification at a Bachelor level or above that has been conferred by a recognised university or college.

**Successful completion of a Board-approved 4+2 internship program** means the individual has completed a 4+2 internship program in accordance with a supervised practice program that was approved by the Board in accordance with the *Guidelines for the 4+2 internship program*. To be considered to have successfully completed the program the individual must have achieved the following during the program:

1. Demonstrated competence in the following areas:
  - knowledge of the discipline
  - ethical, legal and professional matters
  - psychological assessment and measurement
  - intervention strategies
  - research and evaluation
  - communication and interpersonal relationships
  - working in a cross-cultural context
  - practice across the lifespan

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<sup>5</sup> Refer to the Psychology Board of Australia's *Guidelines for the 5+1 internship program*

<sup>6</sup> Refer to the Psychology Board of Australia's *Guidelines for the 4+2 internship program* (currently under review)

2. Completed a minimum of 3080 hours of the approved internship over a minimum of two years and a maximum of five years of which at least:
  - 2800 hours are supervised psychological practice in a work role approved by the Board consisting of sufficient opportunity to develop the required competencies
  - 1120 hours are direct client contact
  - 160 hours are psychological supervision with a Board-approved supervisor where at least one hour of supervision is received for every 17.5 hours of psychological practice
  - 120 hours are professional development
3. Completed and submitted to the Board four case studies that the Board assesses as meeting the requirements of case studies set out in its guideline and demonstrating the attainment of the required competencies, and
4. Completed all the internship requirements set out in the *Guidelines for 4+2 internship programs*.

**Successful completion of a Board-approved 5+1 internship program** means: the individual has completed a 5+1 internship program in accordance with a supervised practice program that was approved by the Board in accordance with the *Guidelines for the 5+1 internship program*. To be considered to have successfully completed the program the individual must have achieved the following during the program:

1. Demonstrated competence in the following areas:
  - knowledge of the discipline
  - ethical, legal and professional matters
  - psychological assessment and measurement
  - intervention strategies
  - research and evaluation
  - communication and interpersonal relationships
  - working in a cross-cultural context
  - practice across the lifespan
2. Completed and graduated from a Board-approved qualification accredited as a fifth year of study, and completed a minimum of 1540 hours of the approved internship over a minimum of two years and a maximum of five years of which at least:
  - 1400 hours are supervised psychological practice in a work role approved by the Board consisting of sufficient opportunity to develop the required competencies
  - 560 hours are direct client contact
  - 80 hours are psychological supervision with a Board-approved supervisor where at least one hour of supervision is received for every 17.5 hours of psychological practice
  - 60 hours are professional development
3. Completed and submitted to the Board two case studies that the Board assesses as meeting the requirements of case studies set out in the *Guidelines for the 5+1 internship program* and demonstrating the attainment of the required competencies, and
4. Completed all the internship requirements set out in the *Guidelines for the 5+1 internship program*.

**Successful completion of a Board-approved transitional program** means: the individual has completed a transitional program that was approved by the Board in accordance with the *Policy for overseas qualified applicants*. To be considered to have successfully completed the program the individual must have achieved the following during the program:

1. Demonstrated competence in the following areas to a Board-approved supervisor through direct observation of practice and/or discussion in supervision sessions:
  - ethical, legal and professional matters as relevant to the Australian context
  - working in a cross-cultural context as relevant to the Australian context

2. Completed a minimum of 210 hours of psychological practice in an approved work role over a minimum of three months/12 weeks and for at least 17.5 hours per week, and
3. Completed a minimum of six hours of individual supervision with a Board-approved supervisor that focussing on Australian ethical, legal, professional, and cultural matters, provided at a rate of at least one hour per fortnight

**Sufficient progress in the research thesis** means that work on the doctoral thesis has progressed to the point where the Head of Psychology School at the educational institution at which the individual is undertaking a Board-approved qualification accredited as a fifth to seventh year of study, is satisfied that the thesis writing is equivalent to a sixth year thesis in size and scope.

## Review

This standard will be reviewed at least every five years.

Last reviewed: <<date>>

This standard replaces the previously published registration standard from 1 July 2010.

# Review of the Continuing professional development registration standard

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## Summary of issue

The National Law requires the Board to develop a registration standard about the requirements for continuing professional development (CPD) for registered health practitioners registered in the profession. The registration standard is part of the regulatory framework for the psychology profession.

The *Continuing professional development registration standard* (CPD standard) applies to psychologists with general registration. Practitioners are required to complete annual CPD in accordance with the requirements of the CPD standard and, when applying to renew their registration, make a declaration that they have completed the CPD required by the Board. The Board is reviewing its CPD standard to ensure it is based on the best available evidence, meets the objectives of the National Law, and is worded as simply and clearly as possible.

The Board, in conjunction with the other National Boards that are reviewing their CPD standards, commissioned a review of the literature on the effectiveness of CPD. The Board has taken this information into account in its review of the registration standard. However available evidence does not provide definitive answers to issues such as the most effective amount and types of CPD. The Board also considered its experience with the standard over the past three years in the review, and together with AHPRA will continue to monitor developments in this area to inform the standard.

As part of this public consultation package, the Board is also consulting on its *Guidelines for continuing professional development*.

## Options statement – *Continuing professional development registration standard*

The Board has considered two main options in developing this proposal.

### Option 1 – Status quo

Option 1 would continue with the existing registration standard which established the Board's initial requirements for continuing professional development under the National Law. The current *Continuing professional development registration standard* is published on the Board's website, accessible from: [www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Standards-and-Guidelines/Registration-Standards.aspx](http://www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Standards-and-Guidelines/Registration-Standards.aspx).

### Option 2 – Proposed revised standard

Option 2 would involve the Board submitting a revised registration standard to the Ministerial Council for approval as the Board has identified a range of opportunities to improve the current standard, including the ability to clarify the language and structure to make it easier to understand.

The Board does not propose to change minimum CPD requirements for maintaining general registration at this stage, although suggestions and rationale for amendments are most welcome and will be considered.

The proposed revised CPD standard would continue to establish the Board's CPD requirements with some minor changes. This includes further explanation of the pro-rata requirements and the removal from the standard of the recommendation that 10 hours be 'active' CPD. The revised standard also has clearer wording and structure to make it easier to understand.

### Preferred option

The Board prefers Option 2.

## Issues for discussion

### Active CPD

The current CPD standard states that of the 30 hours of CPD required annually '10 hours are recommended to be 'active' CPD activities'.

Active CPD refers to professional development activities that actively engage the participants through oral or written activities designed to enhance or test learning. Examples of active learning include activities where there is a written or oral assessment component, demonstrating new skills or knowledge acquired in role plays or in the workplace, or providing peer consultation to others.

Research indicates that practitioners who engage in active learning report a greater increase in knowledge, and have greater retention of knowledge when they have actively engaged in reflective practice, peer discussion and review, and interactive workshops, than those who engage in passive learning only. Research also indicates that skills that have been acquired through active learning where there is an opportunity to observe and practice new skills are more likely to lead to implementation of the new skills in practice.

Therefore Board continues to recommend that psychologists undertake some active CPD every year. However the Board does not propose making active learning compulsory because research suggests that positive and lasting changes to practice arising from professional development are more likely to occur when the practitioner uses a self-directed learning model in which they identify their own learning needs and plan and select the CPD activities to meet their needs themselves. The Board is of the opinion that the individual practitioner is best placed to determine their own learning needs and goals and how best to achieve them; therefore it is important to retain a highly flexible adult learning model.

It is proposed to remove active CPD from the registration standard (including the definitions section) because it is a recommendation but not a requirement. The revised standard aims to clearly set out the mandatory CPD requirements for psychologists and inclusion of information about aspects that are optional is likely to be confusing. Information about active CPD would continue to be included in the CPD guidelines instead to better reflect the nature of the guidance.

### Pro-rata requirements

The Board proposes to continue to allow CPD to be completed pro-rata for individuals who have not held general registration for the whole registration year, e.g. because they registered for the first time part-way through the year, or held provisional or non-practising registration for part of the year. The Board proposes adding clarification to the standard that pro-rata arrangements also apply to peer consultation so one third of the pro-rata CPD must be peer consultation.

### Exemptions

The current CPD standard allows for a partial exemption from the requirements if special circumstances apply. Therefore a psychologist who is generally registered for the full 12 months of the registration year cannot be fully exempt from the standard under any circumstances, but the Board can apply an exemption for up to 29 hours of the 30 hours.

A partial exemption from the standard was included on the basis that practitioners who are absent from practice for 12 months or more and do not undertake any CPD during that time would change their registration type to non-practising which automatically exempts the individual from the CPD standard. However the Board recognises that from time to time there are extenuating circumstances that mean an individual is unable to change their registration type and needs to seek an exemption while still holding general registration, even though they are not practising. Therefore it is proposed to amend the wording about exemptions in the standard to increase flexibility in how exemptions can be applied, so that it would read as follows:

*The Board may grant an exemption or variation from this standard to a psychologist with general registration in exceptional circumstances that result in substantial absence from practice. Exceptional*

*circumstances may include serious illness, injury, bereavement, maternity/paternity/adoption leave, carer's leave, or other exceptional circumstances.*

The revised wording does not specify 'partial' so would enable a full exemption to be granted if appropriate. It also allows the Board to approve variation to the requirements instead of exemption from the requirements when appropriate.

### **Requirements during the first year of national registration**

This section from the current CPD standard will not be included in the revised standard as it is about the transitional arrangements at the beginning of the National Scheme that are no longer relevant.

### **Retention of records for CPD audit**

Now that formal processes are in place for annual CPD audit the Board proposes to include a specification that CPD records must be maintained for five years and provided to the Board if selected for audit.

### **Failure to comply with the standard**

The wording of this section has been updated and specific references to the relevant sections of the National Law included making the information easier to understand.

The option to require a performance assessment is included in the current CPD standard, but has not been included in the revised standard. The performance of an individual can be assessed satisfactorily by a Board-approved supervisor during a period of supervised practice and reported to the Board in a progress report or other agreed reporting mechanism. The Board is not planning to implement a separate formal performance assessment at this stage so a separate option for performance assessment in the standard is not necessary.

### **Definitions**

It is proposed to update the definitions section of the CPD standard to:

1. remove the definition of active CPD – as this term will not be used in the standard, instead it will be defined and explained in the supporting CPD guideline
2. add the Board's definition of practice so that it matches the definition in the Board's *Recency of practice registration standard*, and
3. add a new definition – 'scope of practice'.

### **Review timeframe**

As with the *General registration standard* (see [page 6](#) of this consultation paper) the Board proposes that the next review of the *Continuing professional development registration standard* will commence within five years of implementation of a revised standard following this current review. However if the new five year review timeframe is adopted, the Board may still review the standard earlier if necessary to ensure its continued relevance and workability in a changing regulatory environment.

### **Potential benefits and costs of the proposal**

The benefits of the preferred option are that the draft revised standard:

- is more flexible and user-friendly
- strikes a better balance between protecting the public and impact on registrants and practitioners applying for registration, and
- has been reworded to be simpler and clearer.

The costs of the preferred option are:

- applicants, other stakeholders, AHPRA and National Boards will need to become familiar with the new standard, and
- there may need to be a period of transition if significant changes are proposed during consultation and subsequently approved.

### **Estimated impacts of the draft revised registration standards**

The changes proposed in the draft revised registration standard are relatively small, although more significant changes may be proposed through consultation. Impact on practitioners, businesses, and other stakeholders arising from the changes proposed is expected to be minimal.

### **Relevant sections of the National Law**

Sections [38](#), [109](#), and [128](#).

### **Questions for consideration**

The Board is inviting feedback on the following questions:

- From your perspective, how is the current registration standard working?
- Is the content and structure of the draft revised registration standard helpful, clear, relevant and more workable than the current standard?
- Should there be greater consistency with other National Boards' CPD requirements? Why or why not?
- Is there any content that needs to be changed or deleted in the revised draft registration standard?
- Is there anything missing that needs to be added to the revised draft registration standard?
- Do you have any other comments on the revised registration draft standard?

### **Attachment**

The Board's Statement of assessment against AHPRA's *Procedures for development of registration standards and COAG principles for best practice regulation* is at Appendix 1.

# Registration standard: Continuing professional development

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**Effective from:** <<date>>

**Review date:** <<date>>

## Summary

This registration standard sets out the Psychology Board of Australia's minimum requirements for continuing professional development (CPD) for psychologists.

Registered psychologists have a responsibility to ensure that they continue to maintain, enhance and extend their knowledge and skills throughout their working lives. Consumers also have an expectation that registered psychologists providing professional services do so in a competent and contemporary manner.

## Does this standard apply to me?

This standard applies to all registered psychologists except those with provisional or non-practising registration.

## What must I do?

To meet this registration standard, you must:

1. complete a minimum of 30 hours of CPD activities annually during the period 1 December until 30 November. At least 10 of these hours must be peer consultation.
2. develop a learning plan that:
  - is based on a skills and knowledge self-assessment
  - identifies areas for development or improvement
  - sets learning objectives, and
  - enhances life-long learning
3. undertake CPD activities that are relevant to your area of professional practice and have clear learning aims and objectives that meet your individual requirements. The activities should:
  - be outcome focused
  - seek to ensure continued competence in the your area of practice, and
  - seek to ensure activities have contributed to the quality of your practice, which results in the maintenance of high-quality client services
4. maintain an up-to-date CPD portfolio that includes:
  - your learning plan (see point 2)
  - a written reflection for each activity, including how it relates to your professional development goals, and
  - an activity log of all CPD activities undertaken
5. retain any receipts, tax invoices or certificates of attendance to verify participation in CPD activities, when applicable

6. registered psychologists may participate in a professional development program through their professional society or an equivalent program; participation in these programs will be accepted by the Board if it meets the minimum requirements of this standard, and
7. portfolios that are maintained for alternate programs, and contain the information required in this standard, will be accepted by the Board.

### Pro rata requirements

If you have held general registration for less than 12 months when you apply for renewal of registration or endorsement, you must have completed 2.5 hours of CPD for every month, or part thereof that you have been generally registered, and one third of the pro-rata CPD must be peer consultation.

### Are there exemptions to this standard?

The Board may grant an exemption or variation from this standard to a psychologist with general registration in exceptional circumstances that result in substantial absence from practice. Exceptional circumstances may include serious illness, injury, bereavement, maternity/paternity/adoption leave, carer's leave, or other exceptional circumstances.

Applications for exemptions due to exceptional circumstances must be submitted in writing to the Board for consideration prior to the expiry of registration. The submission must include the nature of the special circumstance and the period of time during the period for which an exemption is being requested.

The *Continuing professional development* guidelines for psychologists provide further guidance.

The Board reserves the right at any time to revoke an exemption to this standard.

### What does this mean for me?

#### When you apply for registration

You don't need to meet this standard when you apply for general registration as a psychologist for the first time in Australia, but you will be required to commit to completing the requirements for CPD during your period of general registration.

#### When you apply for renewal

Participating in a program of CPD is a requirement for the annual renewal of registration. When you apply to renew your registration you are required to declare whether you comply with this requirement.

#### During the registration period

Your compliance with this standard may be audited from time to time.

### Evidence

You should maintain records of your CPD activity for five years in case you get audited.

You will be notified in writing if you are selected for audit and will be required to submit your CPD portfolio and evidence of participation in CPD activities.

## What happens if I don't meet this standard?

The National Law establishes possible outcomes if you don't meet this standard, including that:

- the Board may refuse an application for registration or endorsement, or renewal of registration or endorsement, if you do not meet a requirement in an approved registration standard for the profession (sections 82, 102, and 112 of the National Law)
- the Board may impose a condition, or conditions, on registration or endorsement of registration that requires the registered psychologist to successfully complete:
  - additional CPD activities within a specified period, and/or
  - further education, and/or
  - a period of supervised practice with a Board approved supervisor, and/or
  - require the registered psychologist to undergo an examination (sections 82, 83, 102, 103 and 112 of the National Law)
- a failure to undertake the CPD required by this standard is not an offence, but may be behaviour for which health, conduct or performance action may be taken by the Board (section 128 of the National Law), and
- registration standards, codes or guidelines may be used in disciplinary proceedings against you as evidence of what constitutes appropriate practice or conduct for the psychology profession (section 41 of the National Law).

## Continuing professional development guidelines for psychologists

The *Continuing professional development guidelines* provide more information about how to meet this standard. You are expected to understand and apply these guidelines together with this registration standard.

## Authority

This registration standard was approved by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council on <<Date>>.

Registration standards are developed under section 38 of the National Law and are subject to wide ranging consultation.

## Definitions

**Continuing professional development** is the means by which members of the profession maintain, improve and broaden their knowledge, expertise and competence, and develop the personal and professional qualities required throughout their professional lives.

**Peer consultation** means supervision and consultation with peers in individual or group format, for the purposes of professional development and support in the practice of psychology, and includes a critically reflective focus on the practitioner's own practice.

**Practice** means any role, whether remunerated or not, in which the individual uses their skills and knowledge as a psychologist in their profession. For the purposes of this registration standard, practice is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical care. It also includes using professional knowledge in a direct non-clinical relationship with clients, working in management, administration, education, research, advisory, regulatory or policy development roles, and any other roles that impact on the safe, effective delivery of services in the profession.

**Scope of practice** means the professional role and services that an individual registered practitioner is educated and competent to perform.

### Review

This standard will be reviewed from time to time as required. This will generally be at least every five years.

Last reviewed: <<date>>

This standard replaces the previously published registration standard from 1 July 2010.

# Review of the Guidelines for continuing professional development

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## Summary of issue

The National Law allows the Board to develop and approve guidelines to provide guidance to the health practitioners its registers. The *Guidelines for continuing professional development* (the guidelines) are part of the regulatory framework for the psychology profession.

The guidelines supplement the requirements set out in the Board's *Continuing professional development registration standard*, and the requirements for continuing professional development set out in the National Law under [section 128](#). The Board is reviewing its guidelines to ensure they are based on the best available evidence, meet the objectives of the National Law and are worded as simply and clearly as possible.

## Options statement – Guidelines for continuing professional development

The Board has considered a number of options in developing this proposal.

### Option 1 – Status quo

Option 1 would continue with the existing guidelines. The guideline established the Board's requirements for continuing professional development (CPD) under the registration standard.

The current *Guidelines for continuing professional development* is published on the Board's website, accessible from [www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Standards-and-Guidelines/Registration-Standards.aspx](http://www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Standards-and-Guidelines/Registration-Standards.aspx).

### Option 2 – Proposed revised standard

Option 2 would involve the Board approving a revised guideline.

The CPD requirements and the CPD model are not proposed to be changed, and the guideline would continue to provide guidance on the Board's requirements for CPD. Some changes are proposed to incorporate information currently published in a separate CPD fact sheet and a CPD exemption policy and consolidate CPD information into a single document. The revised guideline also has clearer wording and structure to make it easier to understand.

### Preferred option

The Board prefers Option 2.

## Issues for discussion

### Potential benefits and costs of the proposal

The benefits of the preferred option are that the draft revised guideline:

- is more flexible and user-friendly
- strikes a better balance between protecting the public and impact on applicants, and
- has been reworded to be simpler and clearer.

The costs of the preferred option are:

- applicants, other stakeholders, AHPRA and National Boards will need to become familiar with the new guideline, and
- there may need to be a period of transition if significant changes are proposed during consultation and subsequently approved.

### **Estimated impacts of the draft revised guidelines**

The changes proposed in the draft revised guidelines are relatively small, although more significant changes may be proposed through consultation. There is expected to be little impact on practitioners, business and other stakeholders arising from the changes proposed.

### **Relevant section of the National Law**

#### [Section 39](#)

### **Questions for consideration**

The Board is inviting feedback on the following questions:

- From your perspective, how is the current guideline working?
- Is the content and structure of the draft revised guideline helpful, clear, relevant and more workable than the current guideline?
- Is the guideline too detailed or prescriptive? If yes, what would you change or remove from the guideline?
- Should there be a mandatory active CPD component or should it be kept as recommended but optional?
- Is the CPD model too flexible? Should there be additional requirements such as requiring a variety of different activities to be completed and limiting the amount of hours that may be claimed in one category, such as peer consultation or self directed reading and research? Would this be likely to improve competency and client outcomes?
- Is the CPD exemption policy fair?
- Is there any other content that needs to be changed or deleted in the revised draft guideline?
- Is there anything missing that needs to be added to the revised draft guideline?
- Do you have any other comments on the revised draft guideline?

# Guidelines for continuing professional development

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- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Who needs to use these guidelines?**
- 3. Summary**
  - 3.1 What is CPD?
  - 3.2 Educational rationale
  - 3.3 CPD Model
- 4. The CPD Cycle**
  - Step 1 - Registration status and CPD requirements
  - Step 2 – Develop your learning plan
  - Step 3 – Undertake CPD
  - Step 4 – Maintain your CPD portfolio
  - Step 5 – Renew your registration
- 5. References**

Appendix A - Extract of relevant provisions from the National Law

Appendix B - Identifying CPD requirements

Appendix C - Policy or exemption from CPD requirements

Appendix D - CPD cycle

Appendix E - FAQs

CPD forms:

- Learning plan
- Activity log
- Peer consultation log
- Professional development journal
- Peer consultation journal

# 1. Introduction

These guidelines<sup>7</sup> have been developed by the Psychology Board of Australia ('the Board') under section 39 of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (the National Law) as in force in each state and territory. The guidelines:

- supplement the requirements set out in the Board's *Continuing professional development registration standard*, and
- supplement the requirements set out in section 128 of the National Law in relation to continuing professional development (refer to Appendix A).

## 2. Who needs to use these guidelines?

These guidelines apply to all psychologists with general registration, including those with an area of practice endorsement. They do not apply to provisional psychologists or psychologists with non-practising registration.

## 3. Summary

A requirement for annual renewal of registration is participation in continuing professional development (CPD) in accordance with the Board's *Continuing professional development registration standard* ('the CPD standard'). This document outlines important information about continuing professional development and the steps practitioners need to take when completing their CPD:

Step 1 – Identify your CPD requirements

Step 2 – Develop your learning plan

Step 3 – Undertake CPD

Step 4 – Maintain your CPD portfolio, and

Step 5 – Renew your registration.

### 3.1 What is CPD?

CPD is the means by which members of the profession maintain, improve and broaden their knowledge, expertise and competence, and develop the qualities required in their professional lives. Professional development is an ongoing process which continues over the course of a career, adapting to changes in practice environments, professional domains, new information and consumer needs.

CPD designates the period of education and training of psychologists, starting after completion of basic education and postgraduate vocational training and extending throughout each psychologist's professional working life. CPD differs in principle from the preceding two formal phases, in that CPD implies self-directed and practice-based learning activities rather than supervised education and training.

CPD includes both structured and unstructured learning activities which directly contribute to the psychologist's competence to practise in their chosen field. Carefully tailored professional development can support competency and relevance in practice, which in turn assists members of the public who seek psychology services.

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<sup>7</sup> Based on the World Federation for Medical Education Global Standards for CPD (2003)  
Psychology Board of Australia

## 3.2 Educational rationale

To deliver the highest quality professional service, the content of CPD must be directed towards enhancing professional competencies (both skills and knowledge) including keeping up to date with advances in research evidence and theoretical developments in various domains of psychology, organisation of work (team building and leadership), communication, ethics, teaching, research and administration.

There are three main sources of motivation for individual practitioners to undertake CPD:

- the professional drive to provide optimal evidence-based services to clients
- the obligation to honour the requirements of employers and a commitment to the profession, protection of the public and practice in a competent and ethical manner, and
- the need to preserve job satisfaction and prevent “burn out”.

The best available evidence suggests that effective CPD is characterised by the presence of three factors:

- **An identified need or reason for the particular CPD activity to be undertaken.**  
Specifically identified needs should be the focus of CPD whenever possible. However, professional learning should also equip psychologists to deal with unpredictable future demands and create a broad base of knowledge and experience on which to draw, as well as compensate for deficiencies from past practice.
- **Learning is based on such an identified need or reason.**  
Some CPD should be based on the general professional need to explore, develop and consider new areas of competence. Whether the need identified is specific or general, the learning activities must be appropriate and there must be a balance between general and specific CPD. The method of learning is less important than its relevance to the need and could vary in different circumstances from reading, attending a lecture or a course, a peer group meeting or visiting an institution for consultation and learning.
- **Follow up provision is made for reinforcing the learning accomplished.**  
Following up on learning undertaken reinforces it and offers opportunities for disseminating and sharing learning with others. This leads to positive changes in methods of practice and the extent of effectiveness of the CPD undertaken can be evaluated in relation to the original need or reason for it.

A learning needs assessment is therefore, in most cases, an integral component of successful CPD. Methods for identifying learning needs range from formal assessments (using tests of knowledge, skills and attitudes, peer review, systematic review of practice such as audit or significant event analysis) to the more common ways that are part of everyday practice: thinking about mistakes, reflecting on practice, receiving complaints and feedback, interacting with the team. A learning needs assessment is important for all psychologists, and it is vital for those in isolated, independent or solo practice.

These guidelines focus on the formal and systematic element of CPD such as courses, conferences and formal supervision. It is understood that professionals also engage in continuous learning and development that is informal and often subtle (such as professional dialogue with colleagues, case conferences, and peer review).

### 3.3 CPD Model

The Board recognises the many spheres of practice which draw on psychological knowledge and skills, and that psychologists work in a wide range of areas and roles. Psychologists should apply the CPD principles to fit their individual circumstances.

The Board supports a CPD model which emphasises individual responsibility, offering practitioners flexibility and choice in the strategies used. A process of self-assessment forms the basis for determining the professional development plan for a practitioner.

The Board's CPD model requires psychologists to:

1. identify their own professional development needs within their scope of practice
2. set professional development goals in relation to those identified needs and develop a plan to achieve these goals
3. select and undertake professional development activities to support the individual learning plan identified goals, and
4. evaluate and reflect on the extent to which those activities maintain or enhance practice.

The ultimate responsibility for maintaining and demonstrating professional competence to practise lies with the practitioner, guided by the Board's registration standards, code of ethics and guidelines. There is no best way to maintain, improve and broaden knowledge, expertise and competence. The range of professional development activities selected will vary according to individual career stage, area of practice, learning style, identified needs, and timing and availability.

#### **Organisation and methods**

A multifaceted CPD system is needed to take account of differences in professional roles, needs, learning priorities, and resource availability. While the profession bears a major responsibility for CPD, professional organisations function as major initiators, providers and promoters of CPD. There are also numerous providers of CPD not accountable directly to the profession, including universities, research societies, industry, and consumer organisations.

Opportunities to benefit from CPD on a day-to-day basis depend to a large extent on the working environment. There are wide variations. Work in large institutions can differ vastly, in the stimulus derived from collegiate interaction, compared to working in a rural area, or in solo or small private practice in the community. Information technology can help remedy some of the handicaps of isolation.

#### **Evaluation and recognition**

CPD does not always relate directly to current practice, but promotes competence in new areas of practice and extends the capacity of psychologists to make wiser judgements in complex and ambiguous situations they will certainly encounter in their professional lives.

Use of personal portfolios or logbooks for recording activities with a CPD component provides a tool for planning and monitoring individual self-directed learning. The Board's standard recognises the full range of activities, provided they are documented appropriately. In addition to logging the hours of CPD, a professional development journal should be kept to provide a written outline of the content and relevance of each activity.

## 4. The CPD Cycle

### Step 1 - Registration status and CPD requirements

Psychologists who hold general registration for the full registration year must complete 30 hours of CPD activities for the registration year; of the 30 hours at least 10 hours must be peer consultation. These requirements apply regardless of whether the psychologist works full-time or part-time, as a part-time psychologist needs to maintain the same high standard of practice as someone working full-time.

Psychologists who hold provisional or non-practising registration for the entire registration year are exempt from the CPD standard. Psychologists who hold general registration for part of the year should refer to Appendix C for information on pro-rata CPD arrangements.

The Board may consider a full or partial exemption or variation to the requirements of the CPD registration standard in special circumstances, such as ill health, parental leave, carer's leave or other special circumstances. For more detail on applying for an exemption refer to Appendix C.

Other factors that affect CPD requirements are:

- Area of practice endorsements
- Undertaking a registrar program
- Providers of Medicare psychology services
- Board-approved supervisors

Refer to Appendix B – for more information.

### Step 2 – Develop your learning plan

The best available evidence suggests that effective CPD is characterised by an identified need or reason for the particular CPD activity to be undertaken and follow-up provision for reinforcing what has been learned. Effective planning is important to maximise the benefits of learning, therefore psychologists need to have a written learning plan.

A psychologist must develop a learning plan each year, as set out in the Board's CPD standard. The learning plan can be amended during the year to respond to new opportunities or emerging learning needs. The learning plan template provided in these guidelines is indicative, rather than prescriptive. The Board recommends that practitioners use the template (or one provided by their professional association or society) as they support an efficient auditing process. You can adapt the template to suit your own circumstances and learning need and goals.

Usually your learning plan would be predominantly relevant to your current practice, with scope to explore future relevant interests. However if you plan to change your work role/area of practice in the near future then increasing your knowledge or skills in preparation for this transition can be the focus of the plan. Your plan can also include learning goals and activities that are not specifically relevant to your practice but will broaden your general knowledge of psychological practice.

#### Identify your learning needs and goals

The most effective CPD is based on the practitioner's self assessment and identification of their own learning goals. However if you need some help identifying your goals a good starting point is to review the eight core competencies of psychologists in conjunction with a review of your career stage. The core competencies are listed below and are also in the *Guidelines for the 4+2 internship program*. You could also review the competencies for your specific area of practice which are included in the *Guidelines on area of practice endorsements*. The guidelines are both published in the *Codes, guidelines and policies* section of the website [www.psychologyboard.gov.au](http://www.psychologyboard.gov.au).

The Psychology Board of Australia eight core psychological competencies:

- a) knowledge of the discipline
- b) ethical, legal and professional matters
- c) psychological assessment and measurement
- d) intervention strategies
- e) research and evaluation
- f) communication and interpersonal relationships
- g) working within a cross-cultural context, and
- h) practice across the lifespan.

Things you could consider in setting your goals:

- What are the most important aspects of my current position/practice?
- What are the competencies required for these aspects?
- What do I need to develop or understand further?
- How can I increase my knowledge, strengthen my skills or acquire new skills and knowledge to perform better in my current role?
- What are my career goals?
- What about developments and research in psychology?

Some of your goals may not be things you need to do, but activities in areas of interest that provide the opportunity to develop new skills and knowledge in psychological practice.

*How many goals should I have?*

This is entirely up to you. The CPD learning plan template has space for three identified learning needs but you may have more or less depending on your individual situation. You must identify at least one learning need or goal.

### **Review and revise your learning plan**

Professional development is a continuous improvement cycle and your learning plan can be fluid, with goals set and modified as necessary. You may change your learning plan and goals over the year to accommodate a change in work role, career goals, or as new professional development opportunities arise. Your learning plan may include long term goals that take several years to achieve, or you may achieve your goals set at the start of the year quickly and set new goals for yourself during the year.

You can still count CPD activities completed in relation to a learning need or goal that you later revised or abandoned when your professional development priorities changed, as long as the activities were relevant to your practice and/or goals at the time.

## Step 3 – Undertake CPD

### CPD cycle

The CPD cycle for psychologists is the annual renewal cycle for general registration – 1 December to 30 November every year.

You cannot count CPD undertaken while you were not a registered general psychologist in Australia. If you obtain general registration partway through a registration year you can only count CPD completed from the date you are granted general registration, but pro-rata will apply for the part of the year you are generally registered. This also applies if you change from provisional to general registration during the year.

You cannot count CPD completed after 30 November towards the CPD requirements for the previous year, even if you are renewing your registration during the late period (1 December to 31 December). It will count it towards the next year's requirements.

### Peer consultation

Peer consultation means supervision, mentoring and consultation in individual or group format, for the purposes of professional development and support in the practice of psychology. It includes a critically reflective focus on the practitioner's own practice. You should usually complete your peer supervision or consultation with someone who is more experienced or knowledgeable in the aspect of practice you are consulting them about.

Psychologists must complete a minimum of 10 hours of peer consultation a year within the 30 hours of CPD required each year.

#### *Why does the Board require peer consultation?*

The requirement for peer consultation has been included to raise standards of practice. The primary function of the Board is to protect the public by maintaining high professional standards.

Evidence suggests that engagement in peer consultation is an important part of ongoing competence and continued professional development. Research indicates that the most effective professional development programs are self directed and include interaction, discussion and reflection with peers.

A historical review of notifications received by psychology registration boards in Australia shows that psychologists who have notifications made about them that lead to serious misconduct findings, most often did not engage in any peer consultation about their practice. Significantly, timely peer consultation may have prevented malpractice.

Peer consultation and peer review are essential components characterising the development of the profession and practice of psychology. They are habits that should be fostered throughout a professional career. The peer consultation journal is intended to increase the effectiveness of peer consultation by ensuring adequate review and reflection.

#### *What can be counted as peer consultation?*

Peer consultation is participation in discussion with peers about practice issues. Peer consultation should be relevant to the goals of the overall CPD plan. It should follow an educational rationale. It must be documented in a log book with an attached peer consultation journal to provide a written outline of the content and relevance of the consultation.

Peer consultation includes:

- small group or one-on-one format, and it can be face-to-face, by teleconference, or videoconference

- professional supervision and mentoring received (whether mandatory or voluntary)
- contacting a professional advisory service or obtaining advice and review of aspects of your practice in writing (e.g. via email or letter).

Peer consultation would usually be with a peer or senior psychologist. Other professional persons may be acceptable if they advance the CPD goals. The roles of many psychologists have aspects in common with non-psychologist roles so consultation with non-psychologist peers can often be valuable for professional development. The Board recommends that the majority of your peer consultation is with other psychologists, but depending on your scope of practice you may benefit from consultation with others, for example:

- psychiatrists and other medical practitioners
- mental health nurses
- occupational therapists
- legal practitioners
- teachers and other education professionals
- social workers
- counsellors
- allied health managers
- unregistered academics in psychology
- academics in disciplines other than psychology
- retired psychologists, and
- human resources managers.

You should ensure that you clearly indicate how consultation with non-psychologists links to the goals of your overall CPD plan.

You cannot count consultation with provisional psychologists toward your 10 hours of peer consultation.

You can count consultation with any other generally registered psychologist, including psychologists undertaking registrar programs leading to area of practice endorsement, towards your 10 hours of consultation. Keep in mind though that if you are the supervisor of a registrar, the Board expects that most of your time with the registrar will be spent focusing on the registrar's practice. Additionally it is recommended you aim to complete your peer supervision or consultation with someone who is more experienced or knowledgeable in the aspect of practice.

The time that you may count as peer consultation is the time focusing on your own practice. If you receive professional supervision or mentoring when each session is spent focusing entirely on your practice, then you can count the whole session as peer consultation. However if you participate in consultation in which the group spends some time focusing on the practice of each participant you only count as peer consultation the estimated time spent discussing your specific practice.

Participants in peer support groups must determine the appropriate allocation of time based on the proportion of time focused on each person's practice. This is generally done through the allocation of presenters.

The time you spend advising and focusing on others' practice can be counted towards your 20 hours of general CPD if it contributes to your learning goals, but not as peer consultation hours.

Time spent in a formal role as a supervisor for a Board approved internship program or registrar program cannot be counted towards peer consultation. However up to five hours per year can be claimed as general CPD for the provision of supervision if it develops your skills as a supervisor and contributes to achievement of a goal in your learning plan.

### *What should be discussed in peer consultation or supervision?*

You can consult your peers about any aspect of your psychological practice and the Board has adopted the following broad definition of 'psychological practice':

*'any role, whether remunerated or not in which the individual uses their skills and knowledge as a psychologist in their profession. Practice is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical care. It also includes using professional knowledge in a direct non-clinical relationship with clients, working in management, administration, education, research, advisory, regulatory or policy development roles, and any other roles that impact on safe, effective delivery of services in the profession.'*

Therefore peer consultation can include discussion of aspects of practice such as management, administration, teaching and research when you seek and obtain peer review of your practice. You may also discuss or seek advice from your peers about matters such as psychological ethics, laws and statutes, record keeping, material you plan to publish or present, systems and procedures for managing your practice, and planning and reflecting on CPD activities.

### *Does my peer consultation have to be in my specific area of practice?*

No, peer consultation can be general or related to your area of practice – whichever is most suitable for your current practice. If you do want to count peer consultation towards the area of practice CPD required to maintain an area of practice endorsement, then it must be clearly relevant to that area of practice.

If you are a psychology registrar, all your supervision needs to be relevant to your area of practice and provided by your principal or secondary supervisor/s.

### **Recognised CPD activities**

Examples of types of CPD usually recognised by the Board include:

- conducting or attending psychology workshops, seminars, lectures or courses of study
- writing, assessing or reading and analysing: peer review psychology journal articles, scholarly professional books and monographs, or research proposals and grants
- producing, reviewing or viewing and analysing: professional videos, audios, internet resources or scientific posters, and
- providing peer consultation to psychologists.

### **Active CPD**

Active CPD refers to activities that engage the participant and reinforce learning through written or oral activities designed to enhance and test learning.

At least 10 hours of active CPD is recommended for psychologists each year, but this is a recommendation, not a requirement, unless you are a psychology registrar working towards an area of practice endorsement, in which case 40 hours of active CPD per year is a requirement of your registrar program.

Examples of 'active' CPD include:

- attending seminars where there is a written test
- reading a structured series of professional psychology articles followed by completing an online assessment
- giving an oral presentation or tutorial to a group of peers on a new topic in psychology
- providing peer consultation to others
- attending a workshop which requires in vivo role play of skills
- studying a new technique, followed by trialling this technique in the workplace, followed by a review and evaluation of the effectiveness and implementation of that technique.

## Step 4 – Maintain your CPD portfolio

Your CPD portfolio should include:

- Learning plan
- CPD activity log
- Peer consultation log
- Peer consultation journal
- Professional development journal
- Evidence of CPD

It is recommended that you include a resume/curriculum vitae or copy of the job and person specification for your current position as evidence of how your learning plan is relevant to your current practice.

Your evidence of CPD could include things like:

- Certificates of attendance/completion
- Receipts
- Reading list
- Evidence of compliance with the CPD requirements of your professional association
- Degree certificates or academic transcripts for postgraduate study
- University assignments/theses/research reports/published articles
- Plans and progress reports for professional supervision and mentoring

If you already maintain a CPD portfolio or online CPD logging for a professional association, society or overseas registration authority that meets the Board's standards, you can use the same portfolio or print-outs of online records to meet the Board's requirements.

### **Peer consultation journal and professional development journal**

#### Why do I have to keep journals?

Reinforcement is important in maximising the benefits of learning, hence the inclusion of a peer consultation journal and professional development journal. Written reflection in the journals demonstrates that you have actively engaged in the professional development activities you have undertaken and helps to reinforce learning through integrating theory and practice.

#### How much should I write?

The Board's CPD model is based on adult learning principles. Individual practitioners are trusted to use the journal to engage meaningfully in their own reflection relevant to advancing their annual learning plan. During CPD audits the Board will be interested in the presence of written reflection, not the word count or length. You may use whichever reflection style suits you best i.e. a paragraph format or dot point format or a combination.

Psychologists should use their judgement about the amount of detail needed as appropriate for the different types of activities attended. As a general guide, for each CPD activity you claim your written reflection could include a description of the content of the activity, a summary of what you have learned, and reflection on how this relates to your learning plan and practice. Action taken in response to the learning could also be documented here including further learning needs identified and any further professional development you plan to undertake.

If you take notes during CPD activities then they can be included in your CPD portfolio to meet the CPD reflection requirement if the notes include reflection.

## Certification of CPD

The Board does not certify CPD hours in advance. It therefore does not provide advice to CPD presenters about the CPD points that may be claimed from attending their activities. It is the responsibility of the psychologist to appraise the quality of CPD activities and justify the hours claimed, and be prepared to justify these at audit. CPD activities must comply with the Board's guidelines and standards.

## Tools for recording CPD

Portfolios maintained for alternate CPD programs may be used as long as the portfolio provides the information required by the Board's CPD standard.

Alternatively, a psychologist may use the professional development templates attached to this guideline. All the CPD templates are also available in Word format on the *Forms* page of the website to allow you to type straight into the template.

## Step 5 – Renew your registration

You do not need to submit your CPD portfolio with your renewal – you only need to declare on your renewal application that you understand that you are required to meet the requirements of the CPD standard and affirm that you have completed this requirement.

You will be required to submit your CPD portfolio if you are selected for a CPD audit and advised in writing of the audit.

The Board or a disciplinary panel may also request to see your portfolio to assist with investigation of notifications.

## 5. References

Psychology Board of Australia *Continuing professional development registration standard*

<b>Date of issue:</b> <<Date>>
<b>Date of review:</b> This guideline will be reviewed at least every five years.
<b>Last reviewed:</b> <<Date>>

## Appendix A - Relevant provisions from the National Law

### General provisions

#### Division 3 Registration standards and codes and guidelines

##### 39 Codes and guidelines

A National Board may develop and approve codes and guidelines—

- (a) to provide guidance to the health practitioners it registers; and
- (b) about other matters relevant to the exercise of its functions.

Example. A National Board may develop guidelines about the advertising of regulated health services by health practitioners registered by the Board or other persons for the purposes of section 133.

##### 40 Consultation about registration standards, codes and guidelines

- (1) If a National Board develops a registration standard or a code or guideline, it must ensure there is wide-ranging consultation about its content.
- (2) A contravention of subsection (1) does not invalidate a registration standard, code or guideline.
- (3) The following must be published on a National Board's website—
  - (a) a registration standard developed by the Board and approved by the Ministerial Council;
  - (b) a code or guideline approved by the National Board.
- (4) An approved registration standard or a code or guideline takes effect—
  - (a) on the day it is published on the National Board's website; or
  - (b) if a later day is stated in the registration standard, code or guideline, on that day.

##### 41 Use of registration standards, codes or guidelines in disciplinary proceedings

An approved registration standard for a health profession, or a code or guideline approved by a National Board, is admissible in proceedings under this Law or a law of a co-regulatory jurisdiction against a health practitioner registered by the Board as evidence of what constitutes appropriate professional conduct or practice for the health profession.

### Specific provisions

##### 128 Continuing professional development

- (1) A registered health practitioner must undertake the continuing professional development required by an approved registration standard for the health professional in which the practitioner is registered.
- (2) A contravention of subsection (1) by a registered health practitioner does not constitute an offence but may constitute behaviour for which health, conduct or performance action may be taken.
- (3) In this section –  
*registered health practitioner* does not include a registered health practitioner who holds non-practising registration in the profession.

##### 109 Annual Statement (*part relating to CPD only*)

- (1) An application for renewal of registration must include or be accompanied by a statement that includes the following –
  - (a) a declaration by the applicant that -
    - (iii) the applicant has completed the continuing professional development the applicant was required by an approved registration standard to undertake during the applicant's preceding period of registration

## Appendix B - Identifying CPD requirements

### Factors to consider in identifying your CPD requirements -

#### *Did you change your registration status during the year?*

If you held provisional or non-practising registration, or were unregistered for part of the year you only need to complete CPD for the part of the year had general registration. For every month (or part thereof) of general registration psychologists must complete 2.5 hours (150 minutes) of CPD comprising 50 minutes of peer consultation plus 100 minutes of general CPD. You can only count CPD you completed during the portion of the year you held general registration, but you can choose to spread the hours evenly across those months or complete it all at once.

If you take leave of absence from practice during the year but maintain your General registration you must meet the full CPD requirements unless you apply for and are granted an exemption by the Board (see Appendix C).

If you take leave of absence of 12 months or more the Board recommends that you change your registration type to Non-Practising and then change it back to General before you resume practice using the appropriate application forms.

#### *Are you undertaking a registrar program?*

Psychologists undertaking a Psychology Board of Australia registrar program (to become eligible to apply for an area of practice endorsement) are completing an intensive period of training in a specialised area of practice. They therefore have additional supervision and professional development requirements.

Registrars receive 40 hours of supervision and complete 40 hours of active professional development activities for every full-time equivalent year of the registrar program. This more than covers the minimum requirements of the CPD standard so registrars do not have to complete extra peer consultation/supervision or CPD on top of that required for the registrar program. However registrars who complete the registrar program part time or take a leave of absence during the program must still complete the minimum requirements set out in the CPD standard. That is they must complete 30 hours of CPD per annum including receiving at least 10 hours of supervision (peer consultation). More information about supervision and CPD requirements for registrars is set out in the *Guidelines on area of practice endorsements*.

#### *Do you provide Medicare psychology services?*

Medicare has its own CPD requirements to maintain eligibility to provide psychological services through the Better Access Scheme. The Medicare requirements are separate from the Board's requirements so specific questions about Better Access CPD should be directed to the Department of Health and Aging. See the website at [www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/mental-ba-focus](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/mental-ba-focus) for detailed information on Better Access CPD requirements.

Psychologists who complete CPD for Medicare purposes can count the same CPD towards the Board's CPD requirements.

#### *Do you have an area of practice endorsement?*

CPD activities should be relevant to the psychologist's area of professional practice therefore psychologists with area of practice endorsements are expected to obtain most of their CPD within their endorsed area(s) of practice. Depending on how many endorsements a psychologist has the expectations are as follows:

- Psychologists with one area of practice endorsement complete a minimum of 16 hours of CPD within that area of practice and the other 14 hours required may be in any area relevant to their practice
- Psychologists with two area of practice endorsements complete a minimum of 15\* hours of CPD within each area of practice

- A psychologist with three area of practice endorsements must complete a minimum of 10\* hours of CPD within each area of practice

\**Note:* Medicare requires 16 hours minimum of CPD in clinical psychology for those approved to provide clinical psychology services.

This applies even if a psychologist held general registration for the full year but only had the endorsement/s for part of the registration year. Psychologists work in a specific approved area of practice while undertaking a registrar program (or other approved supervision or bridging program) that leads to endorsement. Therefore, before achieving an endorsement a psychologist will already have been working in that area of practice and will therefore have been undertaking their CPD in that area.

Provided the overall CPD hours to maintain an endorsement are met, you do not necessarily have to complete the majority of the peer consultation component of CPD in your endorsed area of practice, or divide it equally across two or more endorsements. So for example if you have two endorsements, you could choose to do all 10 hours of peer consultation plus 5 hours of activities in one area and 15 hours of activities but no consultation in the other area.

Psychologists with an area of practice endorsement can also refer to the information available in the *Guidelines on area of practice endorsements*.

### *Are you a Board approved supervisor?*

If you are a Board-approved supervisor you have a continuing responsibility to maintain and develop your skills as a supervisor. Therefore to maintain your approval, your CPD must include completion of a Board-approved supervisor-training course, refresher course, or master class course at least every five years. For further details refer to the Supervision section of the website – [www.psychologyboard.gov.au](http://www.psychologyboard.gov.au) under *Registration > Supervision*.

It is also recommended that you include some additional professional development activities relevant to your supervision skills at least every two years, such as peer consultation on supervision, workshops on supervision, or other activities that improve your knowledge and skills in relevant areas such as supervision, learning, teaching or mentoring.

Board approved supervisors are permitted to claim up to five hours toward their general CPD hours (not peer consultation) for the provision of supervision as part of a Board approved supervision program which develops their skills as a supervisor.

## Appendix C - Policy for exemption from CPD requirements

### Summary

The Psychology Board of Australia (the Board) has a registration standard on continuing professional development (CPD) approved by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

The Board's *CPD registration standard* states:

*The Board may grant an exemption or variation from this standard to a psychologist with general registration in exceptional circumstances that result in substantial absence from practice. Exceptional circumstances may include serious illness, injury, bereavement, maternity/paternity/adoption leave, carer's leave, or other exceptional circumstances.*

*Applications for exemptions due to exceptional circumstances must be submitted in writing to the Board prior to the expiry of registration for the Board's consideration. The submission must include the nature of the special circumstance and the period of time during the period for which an exemption is being requested.*

The CPD registration standard allows for the Board to grant an exemption. However, the Board would prefer to only grant partial exemptions. The Board strongly encourages all psychologists with general registration to undertake at least some CPD during a registration cycle or to consider applying for non-practising registration.

The Psychology Board of Australia has delegated responsibility for matters about individual practitioners to regional boards, supported by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) offices in each state and territory. Individual applications for partial exemptions from CPD requirements will be assessed by the state and territory offices of AHPRA and the relevant regional board within the policy framework determined by the National Board.

### Scope

This policy applies to psychologists who hold general registration.

The CPD registration standard does not apply to provisional psychologists, so this exemption policy does not apply to provisional registrants. Provisional psychologists should refer to the requirements of their supervised practice plans or higher degree program to determine CPD requirements.

Psychologists who hold non-practising registration are not required to undertake CPD while they hold this type of registration.

Psychologists who change their type of registration in a registration cycle (such as moving from provisional to general registration) will only be required to complete CPD for the period that they hold general registration (that is, on a pro rata basis). This also applies to psychologists who obtain general registration part-way through a registration cycle (noting psychologists renew registration by 30 November each year) without first being registered as provisional or non-practising.

Psychologists applying for general registration will be advised by the regional board of their CPD requirements at the time their application is approved and do not need to apply for an exemption. The advice from the regional board will specify the number of CPD hours required to be completed within the registration period and any other CPD requirements determined by the regional board.

### Pro rata

Pro rata CPD applies for psychologists who hold general registration for part of the year only. Pro rata CPD is calculated according to the number of months, or part thereof, that the psychologist holds general registration during the registration cycle.

The CPD requirement must be met over a 12 month period from 1 December to 30 November and comprises 30 hours over 12 months, equating to 2.5 hours per month or part thereof. Pro-rata arrangements must be applied to both peer consultation (50 minutes per month) and general CPD (100 minutes per month) unless the Board approves different arrangements.

## **General principles**

The types of special circumstances that may justify granting an exemption to the CPD requirements are limited. They would only be considered when there is compelling evidence that the circumstances have created a significant obstacle to the practitioner's ability to complete the Board's CPD requirements. Each case would be considered on its merits and, depending on the particular circumstances, the Board may allow an exemption.

The Board would not grant pro-rata exemptions due to reduced work hours, casual work or part-time work.

The Board would not consider a decision to pursue employment other than psychological practice (while still maintaining general registration) to constitute special circumstances. In this situation, the practitioner would be encouraged to consider non-practising registration.

Psychologists should only request CPD exemption when the duration of the special circumstances will impede significantly the practitioner's ability to meet CPD requirements for the registration period. Short periods of time when a practitioner is unable to undertake CPD can generally be 'caught up' across the remainder of the registration period. The exception to this is a psychologist who has held general registration for less than 12 months at the time of application for renewal who must complete pro rata CPD for each month of general registration.

An exemption or reduction in the CPD requirements would only be granted when the psychologist's practice has been disrupted significantly due to special circumstances.

As a general principle, financial hardship or remote location are not adequate grounds for an exemption as there are sufficient CPD opportunities available that are free of charge or low cost and/or available online or by correspondence.

## **Examples of 'special circumstances'**

Consideration of exemptions from the Board's CPD requirements may include, but are not limited to, the following circumstances:

### **a. *Significant ill health of the practitioner***

It is likely that most applications for an exemption due to significant ill health would occur in the context of a practitioner returning to practice after an absence.

An example might be when a practitioner has stopped practice due to a serious illness and was unable to undertake any professional development during the period of absence due to his or her illness.

### **b. *Absence from practice due to parental (maternity/paternity/partner/adoption) leave***

An exemption may be granted for a practitioner who takes parental leave.

For example a practitioner who works (full-time or part-time) for six months of the year and takes parental leave for the rest of the year may apply for a CPD exemption for the six months they were not working.

### **c. *Providing care or support to a member of the immediate family or household, because of a significant personal illness or injury affecting the member of the immediate family or household***

An exemption may be granted in circumstances when a practitioner's psychological practice has been disrupted significantly due to having to provide care or support to a member of his or her immediate family or household, because of a significant personal illness of or injury to that person.

**d. Bereavement**

An exemption may be granted in circumstances when a practitioner's psychological practice has been disrupted significantly due to the death of a member of his or her immediate family or household and the practitioner is absent from psychological practice for an extended period of time.

**Applying for CPD exemption**

Psychologists seeking a CPD exemption due to special circumstances must submit a request, in writing, to the AHPRA office in their capital city.

A written request for exemption due to special circumstances must explain the nature of the special circumstances; an explanation of how those circumstances prevent the psychologist from undertaking the required CPD; and the dates for which the CPD exemption is being sought. Supporting evidence should be included where applicable.

Requests are to be made as soon as possible but not more than 12 months before the start date for which the CPD exemption is being sought.

Requests for CPD exemption will be assessed on an individual basis. Where necessary, the psychologist may be requested to provide additional information to support his or her request.

If a request for CPD exemption is approved due to special circumstances, the psychologist will be required to complete pro-rata CPD for each month in the registration cycle that the psychologist is not exempt from the requirement.

Should the psychologist hold an area of practice endorsement, at least half of the required CPD should be within that endorsed area of practice. Should the psychologist hold more than one area of practice endorsement, the required CPD should be split equally between the different areas of practice. At least one-third of the required amount of CPD must be peer consultation. Regional boards reserve the right to vary this requirement if deemed appropriate.

**Contact details**

Send your written request for a CPD exemption to the AHPRA office in your capital city:

**GPO Box 9958**

Canberra ACT 2601  
Sydney NSW 2001  
Darwin NT 0801  
Brisbane QLD 4001  
Adelaide SA 5001  
Hobart TAS 7001  
Melbourne VIC 3001  
Perth WA 6001

# Appendix D - CPD cycle



## Appendix E - FAQs

### **Can I count activities that are part of my regular work role?**

In general, no, you should only count activities that extend your learning. Repeat lectures or workshops that you run on an on-going basis should not be counted unless you can justify how they extend your professional development. You can, however, count conferences, workshops etc that are not part of your everyday work role even if they are organised or paid for by your employer.

### **Can I count a Board-approved supervisor training program as CPD?**

Yes. Approved providers of supervisor training programs are required to provide participants with a certificate of completion which details how much CPD can be claimed for the program, whether there was active learning, and whether there was any peer consultation. For a list of Board-approved supervisor training providers please refer to the *Supervision* section of the Board's website.

### **Does researching or preparing information for presentation or publication count?**

If you are researching or preparing new information you can count it as CPD. If you present the same material at several different forums you should not count it each time. You should only count your own original work, not editing or proof reading of others' material.

If you are a Board-approved supervisor you can count time you spend researching new information in preparation for supervision.

### **I am a generally registered psychologist completing further accredited postgraduate study – can I count it as CPD?**

Yes. Depending on the nature of the study you may also be able to count peer consultation obtained in that context.

### **I am already doing CPD to meet the registration requirements of an overseas psychology board or for membership of my professional association – can I count that same CPD towards the Board's requirements?**

Yes. Provided you complete it within the Board's registration cycle and it meets the Board's requirements, it is fine to 'double up' and count the same CPD for different purposes.

Psychologists who are also registered in another health profession in Australia may find that some of their CPD activities are relevant to the practice of both professions. In this case they could count the same activity towards the hours required for both professions provided the CPD meets the requirements for both Boards.

### **I attended a workshop however they did not provide a certificate of attendance. Can I still claim this workshop towards my CPD hours?**

Yes. Recording the details of the workshop in your CPD log and your written reflection in your professional development journal will be adequate proof of attendance. If you paid to attend the workshop and have a receipt, include that in your portfolio as well.

### **Tips for psychologists who are remote, regional, low income or part-time**

- Some conferences and lectures are recorded and available to watch or purchase online
- Visit your local library for free access to peer reviewed journals and texts and free internet access
- Organise a journal club and share the costs of subscriptions
- Contact your professional association for information about CPD events in regional areas
- Search for online CPD activities, courses and forums
- Organise telephone, teleconference, or Skype consultations.

## Psychology Board of Australia

### Continuing professional development learning plan

**Plan to commence on: Month \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_**

Each year a psychologist should review their practice, identifying areas of need for the following year. These goals should form part of a continuous improvement cycle to consolidate and add to knowledge, skills and competency in the practice of psychology. This review may be undertaken in the context of peer consultation.

	Area of need 1	Area of need 2	Area of need 3
<b>Learning needs identified</b>			
<b>Type of activities proposed to meet this need</b> (peer consultation, seminar etc.)			
<b>Dates proposed activities planned</b> (weekly/monthly/specified dates if known) Note: these dates can be adjusted			
<b>Outcomes anticipated</b>			

**Review Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Outcomes achieved**

Towards the end of the year, review the progress and success or failure to meet these needs. In addition, evaluate all the completed CPD undertaken (even if it was not related to these needs) and reflect upon future needs and goals.

Name of psychologist: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Page: \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

## Psychology Board of Australia

### Continuing professional development activity log

Continuing professional development is the means by which members of the profession maintain, improve and broaden their knowledge, expertise and competence, and develop the personal qualities required in their professional lives. Active CPD refers to continuous professional development activities that engage the participant in active training through written or oral activities designed to enhance and test learning. Active CPD is recommended but not mandatory.

Date of activity	Type of activity (Workshop, reading, seminar, conference)	Active CPD (Y/N)	Activity details (e.g. name of course, presenter, institution etc.)	Specify area of practice (e.g. clinical)	Duration (hours being claimed)
Total Hours					
Hours Active CPD					
Hours Area of Practice CPD					

**Note:** Verification of CPD (e.g. receipts, flyers, citations, certificates of attendance) should be attached. Additional information in the form of a professional development journal should be attached to provide a written outline of the content and relevance of each activity

Name of psychologist: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Page: \_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_

# Psychology Board of Australia

## Peer consultation log

Peer consultation means supervision and consultation in individual or group format, for the purposes of professional development and support in the practice of psychology and includes a critically reflective focus on the practitioner's own practice. Time spent focusing on another's practice within group or individual consultations can be counted as general CPD.

Date	Focus of peer consultation (topic, issue, problem)	Colleagues involved (who you consulted)	Total duration	Duration focused on own practice	Signature(s) of colleagues

Total minutes	Peer consult minutes	Other CPD minutes (total minus peer)
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Note: Additional information in the form of a peer consultation journal should be attached to provide a written outline of the content and relevance of the consultation.

Name of psychologist: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Page: \_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_

**Psychology Board of Australia**  
**Professional Development Journal**

A professional development journal is a written outline of the content and relevance of each CPD activity. Please note there is no set word count or length, however you must write some reflection on your CPD. Your reflection could include a description of each CPD activity that you claim, a summary of what you have learned and how it relates to your learning plan, and action taken in response to this learning.

Date	Professional Development Journal

## Psychology Board of Australia

### Peer Consultation Journal

A peer consultation journal is a written outline of the content and relevance of each peer consultation. Please note there is no set word count or length, however you must write some reflection on your peer consultation sessions. Your reflection could include a description of each session, a summary of what you have learned and how it relates to your learning plan, and action taken in response to this learning.

Date	Peer Consultation Journal

# Review of the Recency of practice registration standard

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## Summary of issue

The National Law requires the Board to develop a registration standard about the requirements for the nature, extent, period and recency of any previous practice by practitioners applying for registration in the profession. The registration standard is part of the regulatory framework for the psychology profession.

[Section 109](#) of the National Law requires a practitioner applying to renew their registration to declare that they have met the recency of practice requirements in the Board's registration standard.

The Board is reviewing its standard to ensure it is based on the best available evidence, meets the objectives of the National Law and is worded as simply and clearly as possible.

The Board, together with other National Boards that are reviewing their recency of practice standards, commissioned a review of the literature on recency of practice requirements. The Board has taken this information into account in its review of the registration standard. The available evidence does not provide definitive answers to issues such as the amount of practice that a practitioner must undertake to remain competent so the Board has also considered its experience with the standard over the past three years and how best to protect the public given current knowledge limitations. The National Boards and AHPRA will continue to monitor developments in this area to inform the Boards' standards.

The Board is also reviewing its *Policy on recency of practice requirements*.

## Options statement – recency of practice registration standard

The Board has considered a number of options in developing this proposal.

### Option 1 – Status quo

Option 1 would continue with the current registration standard that established the Board's initial requirements for recency of practice under the National Law.

The current recency of practice registration standard is published on the Board's website, accessible from [www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Standards-and-Guidelines/Registration-Standards.aspx](http://www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Standards-and-Guidelines/Registration-Standards.aspx).

### Option 2 – Proposed revised standard

Option 2 would involve the Board submitting a revised registration standard to the Ministerial Council for approval.

The registration standard would continue to establish the Board's current requirements for recency of practice, with some minor changes including clearer wording and structure to make it easier to understand.

The Board has not proposed changing the key requirements of the standard including the five year timeframe for recency requirements at this stage, but will consider any proposals and rationale for changing this requirement as part of this consultation.

### Preferred option

The Board prefers Option 2.

## Issues for discussion

### Removal of 'student registration'

Reference to student registration has been removed as under the National Law a student is someone whose name appears on the student register under section 229. There is no student registration for psychology because psychology undergraduates study the discipline of psychology and do not undertake any practical placements. Therefore inclusion of reference to 'student registration' is unnecessary. Use of the word 'student' may also be confusing for provisional psychologists who are enrolled in postgraduate professional degrees.

### Removal of 'unconditionally'

The current *Recency of practice registration standard* requires that an individual must have practiced unconditionally as a registered psychologist within the last five years. However conditions can be applied to registrations, both in Australia and overseas, for a wide variety of reasons and disallowing all conditional practice may be too restrictive. Therefore the Board proposes not to specify 'unconditionally' and consider the nature of practice case by case instead.

### Removal of further education

The current standard (see the Board's website), under *Inability to comply with this standard* includes as one action the Board could take:

- (d) *Require the application to successfully complete further education aimed at remedying shortfalls in their professional knowledge or skills resulting from their recent lack of practice*

The Board proposes removing this because, while further education and CPD can be excellent ways of bringing oneself up to date after an absence, the Board's role is to assess whether the applicant has the requisite skills and knowledge to provide safe and effective care as a generally registered psychologist. The Board has several ways of testing the skills and knowledge for general registration, including supervision and direct observation of practice by a Board-approved supervisor, and the National Psychology Examination. While practitioners may still choose to undertake private study or CPD to prepare for or supplement a supervised practice program and/or the exam, this would be up to the individual after a self-assessment of their skill and knowledge gaps, and not dictated by the Board.

### Additional of an option to grant a different type of registration

[Section 82\(1\)\(b\)](#) of the National Law enables a National Board, after considering an application for registration, to decide to grant the applicant a type of registration in the health profession other than the type of registration applied for.

For the purposes of the *Recency of practice registration standard* this section can be applied to an application for general registration that does not meet the recency of practice requirements, but does meet requirements for provisional registration; so instead of refusing general registration the board grants provisional registration instead. Including this option in the registration standard is intended to make the standard more user-friendly because it will clearly set out in one place all the options Board has available when making a decision about an application.

This option also saves the applicant time and paperwork as they are not required to submit a separate application for provisional registration, although they will usually be required to submit a supervised practice plan. Provisional registration granted under section 82(1)(b) may therefore be subject to a condition that the applicant submit a supervised practice plan within a given timeframe, or the Board may request a supervision plan under section 80(1)(b) before deciding the application.

Section 82(1)(b) can be applied to applications for registration under Part 7, Division 6 of the National Law which may include applicants who are not currently registered or who hold non-practising registration and are applying to change to general registration; it does not apply to applications for renewal of registration.

When an applicant for renewal of general registration does not meet recency of practice requirements they Board can either refuse to renew the registration under section 112(2)(a), or renew the registration under section 112(3) subject to condition/s that the applicant undertake a period of supervised practice and/or pass the national psychology exam.

### **Recognition of discontinued internships**

Currently the *Recency of practice registration standard* does not allow any part of an internship that was undertaken five or more years ago to be accepted by the Board when commencing a new internship. The proposed revised standard has amended wording to enable flexibility to take different circumstances into account.

It is envisioned that the Board would usually consider full hour-for-hour credit if the following requirements are met:

- The five year maximum for completion of an internship is met, i.e. the time period from the commencement of the previous internship for which credit is sought to the anticipated completion of the new internship is no more than five years.
- A progress report for the period of internship for which credit is sought has been completed by the principal supervisor for that internship and provided to the Board, and demonstrates that the internship was undertaken in accordance with an approved internship plan and the intern made satisfactory progress.

The Board would consider partial credit on a case-by-case basis in other circumstances.

### **Exemptions for applicants for provisional registration**

The *Recency of practice registration standard* applies to applications for both general and provisional registration. Applicants for both general and provisional registration can meet the standard if they completed an approved qualification within the last five years. This provision recognises any qualification on the Boards list of approved programs of study (see the *Accreditation* section of the website) and may also recognise overseas qualifications if they are assessed as substantially equivalent.

The Board proposes to include in this revised standard, two exemptions from the requirement for an approved qualification to have been completed within the last five years, which could be granted to applicants for provisional registration. The exemptions are already permitted and included in the Board's *Policy for provisional psychologists with qualifications more than ten years old*.

The exemptions recognise that provisional psychologists are required to undertake a rigorous training program – either an internship or a postgraduate degree – that includes supervision with a Board approved supervisor. There are built in measures to identify and address any attrition of knowledge during the training, before the individual is eligible to practise independently so there is unlikely to be any increased risk to the public by accepting undergraduate qualifications up to ten years old.

Therefore it is proposed that applicants for provisional registration to undertake a Board-approved internship may be allowed up to ten years since completing their fourth or fifth year qualification without any requirement for pre-internship refresher training.

Similarly, applicants for provisional registration to undertake an accredited psychology higher degree program may be allowed more than five years since completing their qualification. The Board has not proposed an upper limit for the age of qualifications in this circumstance, as educational institutions usually set their own upper limit of ten years.

### **Definitions**

The Board proposes to include additional definitions in the revised standard.

## Review timeframe

As with the *General registration standard* (see [page 6](#) of this consultation paper) the Board proposes that the next review of the *Recency of practice registration standard* will commence within five years of implementation of a revised standard following this current review. However if the new five year review timeframe is adopted, the Board may still review the standard earlier if necessary to ensure its continued relevance and workability in a changing regulatory environment.

## Potential benefits and costs of the proposal

The benefits of the preferred option are that the draft revised standard:

- is more flexible and user-friendly
- strikes a better balance between protecting the public and impact on registrants and practitioners applying for registration
- is more consistent with the Board's other standards and guidelines, and
- has been reworded to be simpler and clearer.

The costs of the preferred option are:

- applicants, other stakeholders, AHPRA and National Boards will need to become familiar with the new standard, and
- there may need to be a period of transition to the proposed revised standard, if approved.

## Estimated impacts of the draft revised registration standards

The changes proposed in the draft revised registrations are relatively small, although more significant changes may be proposed through consultation. There is little impact anticipated on practitioners, business and other stakeholders arising from the changes proposed.

## Relevant sections of the National Law

1. Sections [38\(1\)\(e\)](#), 77, 80, and [109](#).

## Questions for consideration

The Board is inviting feedback on the following questions:

- From your perspective, how is the current registration standard working?
- Is the content and structure of the draft revised registration standard helpful, clear, relevant and more workable than the current standard?
- Is psychological practice within the past five years sufficient for keeping skills and knowledge up to date in the psychology profession? Should the recency timeframe be shorter or longer?
- Do you think psychologists should be required to have practiced for a minimum number of hours within the last five years (or another time period) in order to meet the standard? What would the minimum be?
- Do you think the amount of practice experience prior to absence from practice would be likely to have a significant effect on what is required to achieve current competence to practice again? Why?
- Should there be different recency of practice requirements for applicants who qualified more than five years ago but have never practised?

- Should the recency of practice standard be expanded to require recent practice in the relevant area in order to maintain an area of practice endorsement?
- Is there any content that needs to be changed or deleted in the revised draft registration standard?
- Is there anything missing that needs to be added to the revised draft registration standard?
- Do you have any other comments on the revised registration draft standard?

### Attachment

The Board's Statement of assessment against AHPRA's *Procedures for development of registration standards and COAG principles for best practice regulation* is at Appendix 1.

# Recency of practice registration standard

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**Effective from:** <<date>>

**Review date:** <<date>>

## Summary

This registration standard sets out the Board's requirements for recency of practice for psychologists.

## Does this standard apply to me?

This registration standard applies to all applicants for provisional or general registration and all registered general psychologists and provisional psychologists.

It does not apply to applicants for non-practising registration and psychologists who hold non-practising registration.

## What must I do?

Meeting this registration standard is a requirement of registration for all psychologists and provisional psychologists. During the annual registration renewal process all psychologists must declare whether they continue to meet this registration standard.

An applicant will fulfil the requirements for recency of practice if they can demonstrate one of the below at the time they apply for registration or endorsement, or renewal of registration or endorsement.

Registered practitioners must have:

- a) demonstrated practice as a registered psychologist or provisional psychologist within the previous five years, or
- b) successfully completed a Board approved program of study within the past five years, or
- c) successfully completed a Board approved internship or other period of Board approved supervised practice within the past five years.

An applicant who has not practised as a registered psychologist or provisional psychologist for five years or more is not automatically eligible for registration or renewal of registration, and may be required to undertake remedial action. If the Board grants or renews registration under these circumstances, it may impose a condition on registration that the applicant must undertake remedial action within a specified period.

When questions arise on the quantity or type of practice, and whether it constitutes 'psychology practice' for the purposes of this standard, the Board will determine such matters on a case-by-case basis.

If an applicant for provisional registration to undertake an internship has previously participated in a Board-approved internship program that was discontinued without being completed, they are entitled to apply for full or partial recognition of the previous internship towards a new internship program. The Board will consider whether to credit all or part of the previous program on a case-by-case basis taking into account the supervision plan and progress report/s for the previous program. Internship programs are required to be completed within five years including any periods of leave, therefore unless the Board has granted an application for extension due to exceptional circumstances, internships undertaken more than five years ago will not usually be credited towards a new internship. Further details on recommencing internships are available in the relevant guidelines.

Meeting the Board's minimum requirements for recency of practice does not automatically satisfy your professional and ethical responsibilities to ensure that you recognise and work within the limits of your competence, and maintain adequate knowledge and skills to provide safe and effective care.

### Are there exemptions to this standard?

The National Board may grant an exemption to this standard for individuals who:

- successfully completed a Board-approved four-year sequence of study more than five years ago and have been approved by a tertiary institution to enrol in an accredited program of study that requires provisional registration in the higher degree or 5+1 internship pathway, or
- successfully completed a Board approved four or five year sequence of study between five and ten years ago and apply for provisional registration to undertake a Board approved internship program of at least one year full time equivalent (FTE).

The National Board reserves the right at any time to revoke an exemption to this standard.

### What does this mean for me?

#### When you apply for registration

Everyone applying for registration as a psychologist must meet this registration standard, unless they are a recent graduate. This includes practitioners who are applying for a new type of registration, e.g. changing from non-practising to general registration.

#### When you apply for renewal

When you apply to renew your registration, you are required to declare whether you comply with this registration standard.

#### During the registration period

Your compliance with this registration standard may be audited from time to time. It may also be checked if the National Board receives a notification about you.

You should maintain records as evidence that you meet the recency of practice requirements in case you get audited.

### What happens if you don't meet this standard?

The National Law establishes possible outcomes if you don't meet this standard, including that:

- a Board can refuse an application for registration or renewal of registration when the person fails to demonstrate they meet the recency of practice requirements in the approved registration standard for the profession (sections 82(c) and 112 of the National Law), or
- a Board may decide to grant the applicant a type of registration in the professional other than the type of registration applied for, for which the applicant is eligible under a relevant section (section 82(b) of the National Law), or
- the Board may grant or renew registration but impose a condition on registration or endorsement that the applicant must:
  - undertake a period of supervised practice under the supervision of a supervisor approved by the Board, and/or
  - pass the National Psychology Examination, and/or

- registration standards, codes or guidelines may be used in disciplinary proceedings against registered practitioners as evidence of what constitutes appropriate practice or conduct for the registered profession (section 41 of the National Law).

## Authority

This registration standard was developed by the Psychology Board of Australia under section 38 of the National Law after extensive public consultation and approved by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council on <<Date>>.

## More information

The *Policy for recency of practice requirements* provides guidance about how to meet the requirements of the registration standard. Psychologists are expected to apply the policy together with the registration standard.

## Definitions

**Board approved program of study** means a program of study that has been approved by the Board as providing a qualification for registration.

**National Law** means the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law as in force in each state and territory.

**Practice** means any role, whether remunerated or not, in which the individual uses their skills and knowledge as a registered practitioner in their profession. Practice in this context is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical care. It also includes using professional knowledge in a direct non-clinical relationship with clients, working in management, administration, education, research, advisory, regulatory or policy development roles, and any other roles that impact on the safe, effective delivery of services in the profession.

**Provisional psychologist** means a person who holds provisional registration as a psychologist under section 62 of the National Law.

**Psychologist** or **General psychologist** means a person who holds general registration as a psychologist under section 52 of the National Law.

**Recency of practice** means that a practitioner has maintained an adequate connection with, and recent practice in, the profession since qualifying or obtaining registration.

**Recent graduate** means a person applying for registration for the first time whose qualification for registration was awarded not more than two years prior to the date of their application.

**Scope of practice** means the professional role and services that an individual registered practitioner is educated and competent to perform.

## Review

This registration standard will be reviewed at least every five years.

Last reviewed: <<date>>

This standard replaces the previously published registration standard from 1 July 2010.

# Review of the *Policy for recency of practice requirements*

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## Summary of issue

The Board's *Recency of practice registration standard* sets out the remedial action applicants may be required to complete, should they demonstrate an inability to comply with the registration standard. One of the actions the Board may take if the standard is not met is to require the applicant to undertake a period of supervised practice as a provisional psychologist in order to meet the requirements for general registration. The *Policy for recency of practice requirements* sets out the level of remedial action required, depending on the length of practice lapse.

The Board is reviewing the policy to ensure it is based on the best available evidence, meets the objectives of the National Law and is worded as simply and clearly as possible.

## Options statement – Policy for recency of practice requirements

The Board has considered a number of options in developing this proposal.

### Option 1 – Status quo

Option 1 would continue with the current policy that established the Board's requirements for recency of practice under the registration standard.

The current *Policy for recency of practice requirements* is published on the Board's website, accessible from [www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Standards-and-Guidelines/Registration-Standards.aspx](http://www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Standards-and-Guidelines/Registration-Standards.aspx)

### Option 2 – Proposed revised policy

Option 2 would involve the Board approving a revised policy. The policy would continue to provide guidance on the Board's requirements for recency of practice, specifically the level of remedial action required depending on the length of practice lapse.

However, the Board has identified a range of issues with the current policy; therefore the proposed revised policy has been updated to include the requirement to sit the exam for individuals intending to return to practice as psychologist who have not practised for more than 10 years. The revised policy also uses clearer language and structure to make it easier to understand.

### Preferred option

The Board prefers Option 2.

## Issues for discussion

### Potential benefits and costs of the proposal

The benefits of the preferred option are that the draft revised policy:

- is more flexible and user-friendly
- strikes a better balance between protecting the public and impact on applicants, and
- has been reworded to be simpler and clearer.

The costs of the preferred option are:

- applicants, other stakeholders, AHPRA and National Boards will need to become familiar with the new policy, and
- there may need to be a period of transition to the proposed revised policy, if approved.

## Estimated impacts of the draft revised policy

The changes proposed in the draft revised policy are currently relatively small, although more significant changes may be proposed through consultation.

## 4+2 guideline

It should be noted that the supervised practice requirements in the *Policy for recency of practice requirements* are based on the *Guidelines for the 4+2 internship program* which is currently under review and will be released for public consultation later in 2014.

## Relevant sections of the National Law

Sections 77, 80, and [109](#)

## Questions for consideration

The Board is inviting feedback on any or all of the following questions:

- From your perspective, how is the current *Policy for recency of practice requirements* working?
- Is the content and structure of the draft revised policy helpful, clear, relevant and more workable than the current policy?
- Are the proposed supervised practice requirements sufficient to ensure practitioners have current competence to practice? Are they fair and reasonable?
- The current policy addresses only the supervision requirements for individuals who are refused registration but the Board is proposing to expand it to apply to individuals granted provisional registration instead of general registration. Should it be further expanded to also include supervision requirements for those granted general registration with conditions?
- If the policy is expanded should the supervision requirements be the same for provisional and general registrants?
- The policy specifies a minimum amount of supervised practice required depending on length of absence from practice, do you think that the minimum is appropriate? Should there also be a maximum or recommended range for the hours of supervised practice required?
- Is the 4+2 internship suitable as re-entry program? Is it suitable for some applicants but not others?
- Would any of the Board's other supervised practice programs (5+1 Internship Program, Registrar Program, Transitional Program) be suitable as re-entry programs?
- The '*supervised practice requirements*' section of the policy allows reductions by either one half or one quarter in the supervision and professional development requirements of the 4+2 internship for some individuals. Should this be retained? Changed? Would you prefer the requirements to be based on minimum hours or actual hours?
- Should there be pro-rata reductions in the number of case studies and other assessment tasks required for the internship if the individual is requirement to complete less than 3080 hours?
- Is there any other content that needs to be changed or deleted in the revised draft policy?
- Is there anything missing that needs to be added to the revised draft policy?
- Do you have any other comments on the revised draft policy?

# Policy for recency of practice requirements

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## Summary

The Psychology Board of Australia's *Recency of practice registration standard* was approved by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council on 31 March 2010 under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (the National Law) as in force in each state and territory. The standard took effect from 1 July 2010.

Consistent with the registration standard, an applicant who has not practised as a registered psychologist for five years or more before the date of application for registration or endorsement, or for renewal of registration or endorsement, is not automatically eligible for registration or renewal of registration or endorsement. They may be required to undertake remedial action to become eligible for registration or renewal of registration or endorsement. The *Recency of practice registration standard* sets out the remedial action applicants may be required to complete, if they are not able to comply with the registration standard. This policy sets out the level of remedial action required, depending on the length of practice lapse.

## Definitions

**AHPRA** means the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

**Board** means the Psychology Board of Australia established under section 31 of the National Law

**4+2 internship program** or **internship program** refers to the supervised practice program as outlined in the guidelines

**Guidelines** refers to the *Guidelines for the 4+2 internship program for provisional psychologists and supervisors*

**National Law** means the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law as in force in each state and territory of Australia

**National Psychology Examination** refers to the exam as outlined in the *Guidelines for the National Psychology Examination*.

**Practice** means any role, whether remunerated or not, in which the individual uses their skills and knowledge as a psychologist in their profession. Practice is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical care. It also includes using professional knowledge in a direct, nonclinical relationship with clients, working in management, administration, education, research, advisory, regulatory or policy development roles, and any other roles that impact on safe, effective delivery of services in the profession.

**Provisional psychologist** means a person registered as a provisional psychologist under Part 7, Division 3 of the National Law

**Psychologist** means a person who holds general registration as a psychologist under Part 7, Division 1 of the National Law

**Recency of practice** means that a practitioner has maintained an adequate connection with, and recent practice in, the profession since qualifying or obtaining registration, in accordance with the requirements of the *Recency of practice registration standard*.

**Supervisor**, or **Board-approved supervisor** or **Principal supervisor** means a person who holds general registration as a psychologist and who has been approved by the Board to supervise provisional psychologists

To practise as a psychologist in Australia, an individual must be registered by the Board. On this basis, the Board will not accept as evidence of practice:

- a) unregistered practice involving activities of a psychological nature, or
- b) practice involving activities of a non-psychological nature despite these being performed by a registered psychologist.

The level of remedial action required will depend on the amount of time the applicant has not practised as a registered psychologist.

## Responsibilities

The Board is responsible for formulating and approving this policy. AHPRA is responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented and effectively managed.

## Scope

This policy applies to:

- 1) applicants who were previously registered with the Psychology Board of Australia, or a prior state or territory board of Australia, whose registration has lapsed and who are now applying for general registration
- 2) applicants who hold general registration currently with the Psychology Board of Australia and who are now applying to renew their registration, and
- 3) applicants who are applying to change registration status from non-practising registration to general registration.

## Registration decision

When the Board considers an application for general registration or renewal of general registration and the applicant does not meet the requirements of the *Recency of practice registration standard* it may decide:

- 1) To refuse the application for general registration or renewal of general registration, and
  - a) require the applicant to successfully complete the National Psychology Examination before a new application for general registration will be accepted, and/or
  - b) advise the applicant to make an application for provisional registration in order to undertake a period of supervised practice approved by the Board in order to meet the recency of practice requirements and become eligible for general registration
- 2) To grant provisional registration instead of general registration if the application is made under section 77 of the National Law (i.e. does not include application for renewal), and
  - a) require the applicant to successfully complete the National Psychology Examination before a new application for general registration will be accepted, and/or
  - b) require the individual to undertake a period of supervised practice approved by the Board in order to meet the recency of practice requirements and become eligible for general registration
- 3) To grant or renew the application for general registration but impose a condition that the applicant must:
  - a) successfully complete the National Psychology Examination, and/or
  - b) successfully complete a period of supervised practice approved by the Board in order to become eligible for general registration.

## Requirements

If an applicant has not practised as a registered psychologist for:

- 1) more than 5 years but less than 10 years: the Board may require the applicant to complete a minimum of 770 hours of supervised practice as a provisional psychologist under the national 4+2 internship program and to meet the requirements of that program, and may also require the applicant to successfully pass the National Psychology Examination.
- 2) more than 10 years but less than 15 years: the Board may require the applicant to complete a minimum of 1540 hours of supervised practice as a provisional psychologist under the national 4+2 internship program and meet the requirements of that program, and will require the applicant to successfully pass the National Psychology Examination.
- 3) 15 years or more: the Board will require the applicant to complete a minimum of 3080 hours of supervised practice as a provisional psychologist under the national 4+2 internship program and meet the requirements of that program, and will require the applicant to successfully pass the National Psychology Examination.

## Supervised practice requirements

Any period of supervised practice must meet the requirements set out in the Board's guidelines with the following provisions:

- when a minimum of 770 hours is required, the applicant must complete one-quarter of the overall supervision and professional development hours; the supervisor must complete a final assessment of competence form at the completion of supervision.
- when a minimum of 1540 hours is required, the applicant must complete one-half of the overall supervision and professional development hours; the supervisor must complete a final assessment of competence form at the completion of supervision.
- when a minimum of 3080 hours is required, the applicant must complete all supervision and professional development hours; the supervisor must complete a final assessment of competence form at the completion of supervision.

## On completion of remedial action

On successful completion of the remedial action to the satisfaction of the Board, the applicant may apply for general registration. The Board reserves the right to vary the conditions in this policy in accordance with individual circumstances.

## Authorisation

Psychology Board of Australia

Date of issue 1 August 2011

## Review

This policy will be in effect from 1 August 2011. The Board will review this policy at least every five years.

Last reviewed: (day/month/year)

## Statement of assessment

Board's statement of assessment against AHPRA's *Procedures for development of registration standards* and *COAG principles for best practice regulation*

- *Registration standard: General registration*
- *Registration standard: Continuing professional development*
- *Registration standard: Recency of practice*

The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) has produced the *Procedures for the development of registration standards* which are available at: [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au).

The procedures have been developed by AHPRA in accordance with section 25 of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law) which requires AHPRA to establish procedures for the purpose of ensuring that the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme operates in accordance with good regulatory practice.

Below is the Psychology Board of Australia's assessment of the proposal for the revised draft registration standards in *Consultation paper 22* against the three elements outlined in the AHPRA procedures.

### 1. The proposal takes into account the National Scheme's objectives and guiding principles set out in section 3 of the National Law

#### Board assessment

The Board considers that the revised draft registration standards meet the [objectives and guiding principles of the National Law](#).

The revised draft *Registration standard: general registration*, if approved, will provide for the protection of the public by ensuring that practitioners meet a minimum standard of education and training.

The revised draft *Registration standard: Continuing professional development*, if approved, will provide for the protection of the public by ensuring that practitioners undertake appropriate continuing professional development as an important aspect of maintaining their competence.

The revised draft *Registration standard: Recency of practice*, if approved, will provide for the protection of the public by ensuring that practitioners have appropriate recent practice.

The revised draft registration standards also support the National Scheme to operate in a transparent, accountable, efficient, effective and fair way.

### 2. The consultation requirements of the National Law are met

#### Board assessment

The National Law requires wide-ranging consultation on proposed registration standards. The National Law also requires the Board to consult other National Boards on matters of shared interest.

The Board ensures that there is public exposure of its proposals and there is the opportunity for public comment by undertaking an eight week public consultation process. This process includes the publication of the consultation paper (and attachments) on its website.

The Board has drawn this paper to the attention of key stakeholders.

The Board will take into account the feedback it receives when finalising its proposals for submission to the Ministerial Council for approval.

### 3. The proposal takes into account the COAG Principles for Best Practice Regulation

#### Board assessment

In developing the revised draft registration standards for consultation, the Board has taken into account the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) *Principles for Best Practice Regulation*.

As an overall statement, the Board has taken care not to propose unnecessary regulatory burdens that would create unjustified costs for the profession or the community.

The Board makes the following assessment specific to each of the COAG principles expressed in the AHPRA procedures.

#### COAG Principles

##### A. Whether the proposal is the best option for achieving the proposal's stated purpose and protection of the public

#### Board assessment

The Board considers that its proposals are the best options for achieving the stated purposes. As only minor changes to the existing standards are proposed, the impact of the proposals is similar to the existing registration standards.

The Board considers that the revised draft standards would have a low impact on the professions. These low impacts are significantly outweighed by the benefits of protecting the public and providing clearer, simpler requirements, in the public interest.

National Boards in reviewing their registration standards commissioned a review of the literature on the effectiveness of CPD and on recency of practice requirements. The Board has taken this information and its regulatory experience into account in its review of the *Registration standard: Continuing professional development* and *Registration standard: Recency of practice*.

##### B. Whether the proposal results in an unnecessary restriction of competition among health practitioners

#### Board assessment

The Board considered whether its proposals could result in an unnecessary restriction of competition among health practitioners. The proposals are not expected to impact on the current levels of competition among health practitioners.

##### C. Whether the proposal results in an unnecessary restriction of consumer choice

#### Board assessment

The Board considers that the revised draft *Registration standard: general registration* will support consumer choice, by establishing clear requirements for the qualifications and training arrangements that practitioners must meet when they practise, in accordance with the National Law.

The Board considers that the revised draft *Registration standard: Continuing professional development* will support consumer choice, by establishing clear requirements for continuing professional development that practitioners must meet as a key part of maintaining their competence, in accordance with the National Law.

The Board considers that the revised draft *Registration standard: Recency of practice* will support consumer choice, by establishing clear requirements for recency of practice that practitioners must meet, in accordance with the National Law.

**D. Whether the overall costs of the proposal to members of the public and/or registrants and/or governments are reasonable in relation to the benefits to be achieved**

**Board assessment**

The Boards considered the overall costs of the revised registration standards to members of the public, registrants and governments and concluded that the likely costs are appropriate when offset against the benefits that the revised draft standards contribute to the National Scheme.

Subject to stakeholder feedback on the proposed revisions and if approved by the Ministerial Council, the revised draft standards should have only minimal (if any) impact on the costs to applicants by presenting the Board's requirements in a clearer and simpler way.

**E. Whether the requirements are clearly stated using 'plain language' to reduce uncertainty, enable the public to understand the requirements, and enable understanding and compliance by registrants**

**Board assessment**

The Boards consider the revised draft registration standards have been written in plain English that will help practitioners to understand the requirements of the standard. The Boards have changed the structure of the standards and reviewed the wording to make the standards easier to understand.

**F. Whether the Board has procedures in place to ensure that the proposed registration standard, code or guideline remains relevant and effective over time**

**Board assessment**

If approved, the Boards will review the revised registration standards at least every five years, including an assessment against the objectives and guiding principles in the proposed National Law and the COAG principles for best practice regulation.

However, the Board may choose to review the standards earlier, if it is necessary to ensure the standards' continued relevance and workability.

## Legislation

The sections of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law) relevant to this consultation are set out below. The full versions of the National Law for each state and territory are published on AHPRA's website at: [www.ahpra.gov.au/About-AHPRA/What-We-Do/Legislation.aspx](http://www.ahpra.gov.au/About-AHPRA/What-We-Do/Legislation.aspx)

### 3. Objectives and guiding principles

- (2) The objectives of the national registration and accreditation scheme are—
  - (a) to provide for the protection of the public by ensuring that only health practitioners who are suitably trained and qualified to practise in a competent and ethical manner are registered; and
  - (b) to facilitate workforce mobility across Australia by reducing the administrative burden for health practitioners wishing to move between participating jurisdictions or to practise in more than one participating jurisdiction; and
  - (c) to facilitate the provision of high quality education and training of health practitioners; and
  - (d) to facilitate the rigorous and responsive assessment of overseas-trained health practitioners; and
  - (e) to facilitate access to services provided by health practitioners in accordance with the public interest; and
  - (f) to enable the continuous development of a flexible, responsive and sustainable Australian health workforce and to enable innovation in the education of, and service delivery by, health practitioners.
- (3) The guiding principles of the national registration and accreditation scheme are as follows—
  - (a) the scheme is to operate in a transparent, accountable, efficient, effective and fair way;
  - (b) fees required to be paid under the scheme are to be reasonable having regard to the efficient and effective operation of the scheme;
  - (c) restrictions on the practice of a health profession are to be imposed under the scheme only if it is necessary to ensure health services are provided safely and are of an appropriate quality.

### 12 Approval of registration standards

- (1) The Ministerial Council<sup>8</sup> may approve a registration standard about—
  - (a) the registration, or renewal of registration, of persons in a health profession; or
  - (b) the endorsement, or renewal of the endorsement, of the registration of registered health practitioners.
- (2) The Ministerial Council may approve a registration standard for a health profession only if—

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<sup>8</sup> The Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council comprising Ministers of the governments of the participating jurisdictions and the Commonwealth with the portfolio responsibility for health.

- (a) its approval is recommended by the National Board established for the health profession; and
  - (b) it does not provide for a matter about which an accreditation standard may provide.
- (3) The Ministerial Council may, at any time, ask a National Board to review an approved or proposed registration standard for the health profession for which the National Board is established.

### 31 Establishment of National Boards

The Psychology Board of Australia is established as the National Health Practitioner Board for the psychology profession.

### 35 Functions of National Boards

- (1) The functions of a National Board established for a health profession are as follows—
- (a) to register suitably qualified and competent persons in the health profession and, if necessary, to impose conditions on the registration of persons in the profession;
  - (b) to decide the requirements for registration or endorsement of registration in the health profession, including the arrangements for supervised practice in the profession;
  - (c) to develop or approve standards, codes and guidelines for the health profession, including—
    - (i) the approval of accreditation standards developed and submitted to it by an accreditation authority<sup>9</sup>; and
    - (ii) the development of registration standards for approval by the Ministerial Council; and
    - (iii) the development and approval of codes and guidelines that provide guidance to health practitioners registered in the profession;
  - (d) to approve accredited programs of study as providing qualifications for registration or endorsement in the health profession;
  - (e) to oversee the assessment of the knowledge and clinical skills of overseas trained applicants for registration in the health profession whose qualifications are not approved qualifications for the profession, and to determine the suitability of the applicants for registration in Australia;
  - (f) to negotiate in good faith with, and attempt to come to an agreement with, the National Agency<sup>10</sup> on the terms of a health profession agreement;
  - (g) to oversee the receipt, assessment and investigation of notifications about persons who—
    - (i) are or were registered as health practitioners in the health profession under this Law or a corresponding prior Act; or
    - (ii) are students<sup>11</sup> in the health profession;
  - (h) to establish panels to conduct hearings about—

<sup>9</sup> The Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC)

<sup>10</sup> The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

<sup>11</sup> In the National Law 'student' means a person registered as a student under Part 7, Division 7 of the National Law. The Psychology Board does not offer student registration therefore references to students do not apply. Psychology higher degree students are required to be registered as provisional psychologists and are therefore registered health practitioners under the National Law.

- (i) health and performance and professional standards matters in relation to persons who are or were registered in the health profession under this Law or a corresponding prior Act; and
  - (ii) health matters in relation to students registered by the Board;
- (i) to refer matters about health practitioners who are or were registered under this Law or a corresponding prior Act to responsible tribunals for participating jurisdictions;
  - (j) to oversee the management of health practitioners and students registered in the health profession, including monitoring conditions, undertaking and suspensions imposed on the registration of the practitioners or students;
  - (k) to make recommendations to the Ministerial Council about the operation of specialist recognition in the health profession and the approval of specialties for the profession;
  - (l) in conjunction with the National Agency, to keep up-to-date and publicly accessible national registers of registered health practitioners for the health profession;
  - (m) in conjunction with the National Agency, to keep an up-to-date national register of students for the health profession;
  - (n) at the Board's discretion, to provide financial or other support for health programs for registered health practitioners and students;
  - (o) to give advice to the Ministerial Council on issues relating to the national registration and accreditation scheme for the health profession;
  - (p) if asked by the Ministerial Council, to give to the Ministerial Council the assistance or information reasonably required by the Ministerial Council in connection with the national registration and accreditation scheme;
  - (q) to do anything else necessary or convenient for the effective and efficient operation of the national registration and accreditation scheme;
  - (r) any other function given to the Board by or under this Law.

### **38 National board must develop registration standards**

- (1) A National Board must develop and recommend to the Ministerial Council one or more registration standards about the following matters for the health profession for which the Board is established—
  - (c) requirements for continuing professional development for registered health practitioners registered in the profession;
  - (e) requirements in relation to the nature, extent, period and recency of any previous practice of the profession by applicants for registration in the profession
- (2) A National Board may also develop and recommend to the Ministerial Council one or more registration standards about the following—
  - (c) any other issue relevant to the eligibility of individuals for registration in the profession or the suitability of individuals to competently and safely practise the profession.

### **39 Codes and guidelines**

A National Board may develop and approve codes and guidelines

**40 Consultation about registration standards, codes and guidelines**

- (1) If a National Board develops a registration standard or a code or guideline, it must ensure there is wide-ranging consultation about its content.
- (2) A contravention of subsection (1) does not invalidate a registration standard, code or guideline.

**52 Eligibility for general registration**

- (1) An individual is eligible for general registration in a health profession if—
  - (a) the individual is qualified for general registration in the health profession; and
  - (b) the individual has successfully completed—
    - (i) any period of supervised practice in the health profession required by an approved registration standard for the health profession; or
    - (ii) any examination or assessment required by an approved registration standard for the health profession to assess the individual's ability to competently and safely practise the profession; and
  - (c) the individual is a suitable person to hold general registration in the health profession; and
  - (d) the individual is not disqualified under this Law or a law of a co-regulatory jurisdiction from applying for registration, or being registered, in the health profession; and
  - (e) the individual meets any other requirements for registration stated in an approved registration standard for the health profession.
- (2) Without limiting subsection (1), the National Board established for the health profession may decide the individual is eligible for general registration in the profession by imposing conditions on the registration under section 83.

**53 Qualifications for general registration**

An individual is qualified for general registration in a health profession if—

- (a) the individual holds an approved qualification for the health profession; or
- (b) the individual holds a qualification the National Board established for the health profession considers to be substantially equivalent, or based on similar competencies, to an approved qualification; or
- (c) the individual holds a qualification, not referred to in paragraph (a) or (b), relevant to the health profession and has successfully completed an examination or other assessment required by the National Board for the purpose of general registration in the health profession; or
- (d) the individual—
  - (i) holds a qualification, not referred to in paragraph (a) or (b), that under this Law or a corresponding prior Act qualified the individual for general registration (however described) in the health profession; and
  - (ii) was previously registered under this Law or the corresponding prior Act on the basis of holding that qualification.

**62 Eligibility for provisional registration**

- (1) An individual is eligible for provisional registration in a health profession, to enable the individual to complete a period of supervised practice that the individual requires to be eligible for general registration in the health profession, if—
- (a) the individual is qualified for general registration in the profession;

**82 Decision about application**

- (1) After considering an application for registration and any submissions made in accordance with a notice under section 81, a National Board established for a health profession must—
- (a) decide to grant the applicant the type of registration in the health profession applied for if the applicant is eligible for that type of registration under a relevant section; or
- (b) decide to grant the applicant a type of registration in the health profession, other than the type of registration applied for, for which the applicant is eligible under a relevant section; or
- (c) decide to refuse to grant the applicant registration in the health profession if—
- (i) the applicant is ineligible for registration in the profession under a relevant section because the applicant—
- (E) does not meet a requirement for registration stated in an approved registration standard for the profession;

**109 Annual statement**

- (1) An application for renewal of registration must include or be accompanied by a statement that includes the following—
- (a) a declaration by the applicant that—
- (ii) the applicant has met any recency of practice requirements stated in an approved registration standard for the health profession; and
- (iii) the applicant has completed the continuing professional development the applicant was required to by an approved registration standard to undertake during the applicant's preceding period of registration

**128 Continuing professional development**

- (1) A registered health practitioner must undertake the continuing professional development required by an approved registration standard for the health profession in which the practitioner is registered.