



Psychology Board of Australia

REGISTRATION STANDARD: RECENCY OF PRACTICE

1 December 2016

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Summary

This registration standard sets out the Psychology Board of Australia's (the Board) 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 are applying to renew non-practising registration.

What do I have to 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. completed a minimum of 250 hours of practice as a registered psychologist or provisional psychologist (or equivalent for overseas practice) 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 of 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

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- successfully completed a Board approved four or five year sequence of study between five and 10 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 I 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 profession 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
- 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 approved by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council on 27 August 2015 with approval taking effect from 1 December 2016.

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

More information

The *Policy for recency of practice requirements* provides guidance about how to meet the requirements of this registration standard and factors that are taken into account when determining the minimum remedial requirements for individuals who do not meet the standard. Psychologists are expected to apply the policy together with the registration standard.

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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 psychologist in the 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: 1 December 2016

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