



Communiqué

26 February 2016

The Psychology Board of Australia (the Board) is established under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law). At each meeting, the Board considers a wide range of issues, many of which are routine and are not included in this communiqué.

This communiqué highlights key issues from the 71st meeting of the Board on 26 February 2016.

General registration standard update

The Board's revised general registration standard will come into effect on 2 May 2016 and the current general registration standard, which has been in place since 1 July 2010, will be retired.

The revisions primarily improve the structure and update the terminology to explain existing requirements more clearly, and align the standard more closely with the requirements under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

The revisions do not introduce any new requirements for general registration. All current pathways to general registration – including accredited higher degree programs, internships, and transitional programs for overseas-qualified applicants – will continue to be recognised and meet the standard.

Current provisional psychologists who will be applying for general registration after 2 May 2016 are advised to review the revised standard to confirm that they will meet all the requirements before applying for registration.

Further information is available on the [Board's website](#).

Guidelines for the National Psychology Exam are now updated

The *Guidelines for the National Psychology Exam* (the guidelines) have been updated and the new version will be available shortly on the Board's website.

The guidelines were updated as a result of the Board's recent *Consultation on ending the higher degree exemption from sitting the National Psychology Exam (Consultation paper 25)*.

As announced in the December 2015 Communiqué, the Board has agreed to keep the higher degree exemption in place for another three years – until 30 June 2019. The updates to the guidelines reflect the decision that applicants for registration who have completed an APAC accredited higher degree program will not be required to pass the National Psychology Exam for general registration over the next three years. The FAQ has also been updated to note this extension.

See the *National Psychology Exam* section on the [Board's website](#) for more information.

The Policy and procedure for candidates who fail the exam three times now published

The Board has published the [Policy and procedure for candidates who fail the exam three times](#) and an associated *Statement and plan for professional development* (the [SPPD-76 form](#)).

This policy provides further detail on the procedures to follow in the event that a registrant fails the exam three times. This includes what options are available to them, the steps they should take, and the evidence required by the Board to progress their plan to successfully re-sit the exam beyond three attempts.

The guidelines have been updated to note the addition of this new policy.

Consultation update

Public consultation – Area of practice endorsements

The Board is currently undertaking a scheduled review of its registration standard for area of practice endorsements and the supporting guidelines on area of practice endorsements. Public consultation on the standard and guideline has recently been completed and the Board thanks all registrants and stakeholders who took the time to provide a submission. The submissions are currently being reviewed and will be published (except those made in confidence) under [Past consultations](#) on the website soon.

Preliminary consultation – Professional indemnity insurance

The Board is currently undertaking a scheduled review of its registration standard for professional indemnity insurance (PII). The review is being done in conjunction with a number of other National Boards that are also reviewing their PII standards. The review is also taking into account research carried out and feedback received by 10 other National Boards that completed a review of their PII standards in 2015, as there may be opportunity for greater consistency between National Boards' PII requirements. Preliminary consultation will start soon.

Preliminary consultation – Guidelines for transitional programs

The Board has agreed to develop and consult on a new guideline for transitional programs for overseas-trained applicants for psychology registration. Currently, information about the requirements of the transitional program is published in the *Policy for overseas qualified applicants for registration*. Preliminary consultation will start soon.

Psychology Board of Australia profession profile

The Board will publish in late March a report of its work in the psychology profession in the National Scheme during 2014/15.

The report provides a profession-specific view of the Board's work to manage risk to the public. It is a profile of regulation at work for psychologists in Australia for the 12 months ending 30 June 2015.

The data in this report are drawn from data published in the [2014/15 annual report](#) of AHPRA and the National Boards, reporting on the National Scheme.

Local data summaries from National Scheme

The National Boards and AHPRA have published [reports for each state and territory](#) on the National Scheme.

The reports provide a unique insight on local outcomes within a scheme for which the core focus is protection of the public. The reports are for the 2014/15 year of the scheme.

The summaries provide local data on registration types, notifications (complaints) and mandatory notifications for the regulated health professions, including psychology, for each state and territory.

National awareness campaign

You may have seen the beginning of the AHPRA national awareness campaign. **Know your obligations**, the first of three phases, directed at employers of health practitioners, launched at the close of last year. The message has been shared over social media through targeted ads resulting in a doubling of our online community.

The next phase of the campaign is targeted at practitioners. Under the headline of **The not-so-small print**, practitioners are encouraged to stay up to date with regulation changes as they occur, and to be aware of their obligations as registered practitioners. Advertisements will be rolled out later this month across a mix of social media, industry publications and newsletters.

The final phase will be directed at the public to increase awareness of the [national register of practitioners](#).

Health practitioner regulation: Learn how you're protected

A new video and an accompanying infographic explaining the Australia-wide scheme that is in place to protect members of the public was released by AHPRA in December.

Both resources are available on the [What we do](#) page of the AHPRA website or read the [news item](#) on the Board website for more information. The video can also be watched on AHPRA's [YouTube channel](#).

Employer obligations

If you employ registered health practitioners, you have an important obligation to ensure that they hold current registration and that you understand your mandatory notification requirements under the National Law.

AHPRA has published [resources](#) to help you understand and meet your obligations, which are designed to complement your recruitment requirements and processes. These materials state exactly what your obligations are and it is important that you are familiar with them.

Professor Brin Grenyer
Chair
Psychology Board of Australia

11 March 2016