



Communiqué

29 April 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 73rd meeting of the Board on 29 April 2016.

Streamlining the application process for psychology registration for overseas-qualified applicants

From 1 June 2016 the Board will streamline the application process for overseas-qualified applicants¹, by overseeing the assessment of their knowledge and skills as part of their application for registration in Australia.

What we used to do

Since the start of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme), assessment of overseas qualifications has been a two-step process for psychology.

To date, before applying for registration in Australia, the Board has asked overseas-qualified applicants to have their qualifications assessed by the [Australian Psychological Society \(APS\)](#) – the national assessing authority for the purpose of migration.

The Board then considered the APS qualification assessment outcome, along with other relevant evidence, to determine whether the qualifications and training are substantially equivalent to those required for registration in Australia.

This two-step process has helped to maintain standards of qualifications assessment during the first five years of national registration.

What we will be doing from 1 June 2016

Over the past few years, the Board has been working towards streamlining the application process for overseas-qualified applicants in line with its functions under the National Law.

Since 2013 overseas-qualified applicants have been required to pass the National Psychology Exam, and complete at least three months of supervised practice in the transitional program.

On 1 June 2016 the final step towards a streamlined application process will come into effect. The assessment of the knowledge and skills of overseas-qualified applicants will be carried out as part of an application for registration, administered by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) with oversight by the Board.

Further information is published under [Registration>overseas applicants](#)

¹ Function under section 35(1)(e) of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law) to oversee the assessment of the knowledge and skills of overseas-qualified applicants.

Appointments to the Overseas Qualified Psychologists Assessment Advisory Committee

The Board has recently established the Overseas Qualified Psychologists Assessment Advisory Committee (advisory committee) to assist the Board in assessing the knowledge and clinical skills of overseas-qualified psychologists.

The Board has appointed the following five members to the advisory committee for 12 months:

- Professor Brin Grenyer (committee chair)
- Professor Alison Garton
- Professor Gina Geffen
- Professor Stephen Touyz, and
- Associate Professor Graham Tyson.

The appointments are made by the Board under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

The role of the advisory committee will be to provide expert input, as required by the Board and AHPRA on matters related to the assessment of overseas-qualified psychologists and their qualifications within the Board's approved model of assessment.

Advisory committee members are senior members of the psychology profession who have experience and knowledge in the core competencies required for registration in the profession, including experience in the assessment of overseas-qualified psychologists and expertise in psychology course accreditation expertise, and delivery of psychology programs in Australia.

The advisory committee will meet regularly throughout the year with the first meeting scheduled for 6 June 2016.

Review of the Area of practice endorsement registration standard and guideline

The Board recently invited feedback about area of practice endorsements via its 26th public consultation paper.

The consultation paper generated a high number of submissions from a wide range of stakeholders, including professional associations/societies/colleges, the higher education sector (students, academics and professional staff), employers, government and individual registrants.

All the submissions (except those made in confidence) have now been published on the website under [Past consultations](#) together with the consultation paper.

The Board is currently reviewing all stakeholder feedback which, given the high number of submissions, will take some time to complete. The Board will publish further updates as the review progresses.

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 is now available 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.

General registration standard implementation

The revised *General registration standard* came into effect on 2 May 2016 and applications for general registration will be decided under the new standard.

The [Board's website](#) has been updated with the revised standard and supporting information, including a number of new application, reporting and recording forms. Fact sheets on transition arrangements for 4+2 and 5+1 interns are also available online.

The Board wrote to all current 4+2 and 5+1 interns, and their supervisors (except supervisors whose PPP is NSW) during April to advise of the changes that will affect internship pathway applicants for general registration.

Recency of practice registration standard implementation

A new [recency of practice resources page](#) has been published to support the revised *Recency of practice registration standard* and policy for recency of practice requirements, which come into effect later in 2016.

The new web page includes draft copies of following new forms that will support the new re-entry to practice programs:

- Plan for professional development and re-entry to practice – PLPD-76, and
- Progress report for professional development and re-entry to practice – PRPS-76.

Applications to start the new re-entry programs will not be accepted until 1 December 2016, but the forms have been published now to allow applicants returning to practice after 1 December 2016 to plan their re-entry in advance. As they are for information only at this stage they are published in non-interactive PDF format. They will be replaced with interactive versions closer to 1 December.

Quarterly registration data released

The Board has released its quarterly registration data. Read the latest report and other statistics on the Board's [statistics page](#).

Quarterly performance reports released

AHPRA and the National Boards, including the Psychology Board, have released new information about their performance in each state and territory to improve transparency and accountability.

The comprehensive information and data has been published on the [AHPRA website](#) to help the community and health practitioners better understand what AHPRA and the National Boards do and how.

The quarterly performance reports include data specific to each state and territory for the period October to December 2015 and covers AHPRA and the National Boards' main areas of activity in implementing the National Scheme.

To provide feedback on the reports email: reportingfeedback@ahpra.gov.au.

Progress update from the Collaborative Working Group on *Reviewing the psychology education and training model* – see Attachment A

Professor Brin Grenyer
Chair
Psychology Board of Australia

09 May 2016

Attachment A

Reviewing the psychology education and training model

Preparing psychologists for practice and sustaining a skilled psychologist workforce for
the future needs of the public

Communiqué

28th April 2016

Reviewing the psychology education and training model – progress update

Over the past year, representatives from the Australian Psychological Society, Australian Psychology Accreditation Council, Heads of Departments and Schools of Psychology Association and the Psychology Board of Australia (the *Collaborative Working Party*) have been working together to review the psychology education and training model.

The starting point for the review was the national psychology education forum held late last year in Canberra. This forum brought together leaders across government, education, workforce, regulation and the profession.

A summary of outcomes can be viewed in the 18 December PsyBA Communiqué

www.psychologyboard.gov.au/News/Communiques.aspx.

In recent months, the *Collaborative Working Party* has been refining the options for reform. We agree that psychology education and training pathways should:

1. be consistent with international benchmarks,
2. meet current and projected workforce demand,
3. provide improved access to additional qualifications (such as area of practice endorsement),
4. be sufficiently resourced.

In response to feedback from participants at the National Forum further work is currently being undertaken in a number of areas:

1. the implications for the workforce and access to services
2. opportunities to improve internships and other supervised practice and placement programs
3. exploring education and funding models
4. enhancing the education and training pathway for area of practice endorsement.

Once this work has been completed further engagement activities will be undertaken to 'road test' the feasibility of the options for reform.