



## Public consultation

### Revised guidelines for supervisors and supervisor training providers

5 March 2018

The Psychology Board of Australia (the Board) is releasing this public consultation paper seeking feedback on the review of the *Guidelines for supervisors and supervisor training providers*. As part of this review the Board is also reviewing the *Policy on refusing or revoking Board-approved supervisor status* and the *Policy on the revocation of Board-approved supervisor training provider status*.

The Board has determined to review the guidelines every three to five years in keeping with good regulatory practice. The current guidelines have been in place for almost five years, and this is the first review of those guidelines. The aim of this review is to ensure the supervisor arrangements:

- remain fit-for-purpose
- align with updates to other Board guidelines and registration standards, and
- are up-to-date with advances in psychology and psychology supervision

The purpose of this consultation is to obtain comments and suggestions about the proposal from the profession, community, governments, employers, and other stakeholders. You may choose to provide feedback on any aspect of this consultation. The following consultation paper outlines the proposed revised *Guidelines for supervisors* and *Guidelines for supervisor training providers*. It explains and discusses the proposed changes, and asks questions about the review you may wish to address in your response.

#### You are invited to provide feedback

Please provide written submissions by email with the subject title marked '**Consultation – supervisor guidelines**'. Please send to [psychconsultation@ahpra.gov.au](mailto:psychconsultation@ahpra.gov.au) by close of business (AEST), **Friday 27 April 2018**.

Please provide your submission in **Word format** to help us meet international web accessibility guidelines (see [www.ahpra.gov.au/About-AHPRA/Accessibility](http://www.ahpra.gov.au/About-AHPRA/Accessibility) for more information)

#### 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 stakeholders and the community. However, the Board retains the right not to publish submissions at its discretion, and will not place on its 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 Board will make reasonable efforts to remove information that personally identifies individuals making submissions, as well as individuals referred to in submissions, including their contact details.

The views expressed in submissions are those of the individuals or organisations who submit them and publication does not imply any acceptance of, or agreement with, those views by the Board.

The Board will 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. Whilst the Board and AHPRA will take all reasonable steps to preserve the confidentiality of these submissions, these may be disclosed if this is required by law or by a committee of a parliament. Usually requests for access to a confidential submission will be determined in accordance with the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth), 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.**

#### **More information**

For more information about the consultation process please refer to the document *Consultation process of National Boards* available at [www.ahpra.gov.au/Publications/Procedures](http://www.ahpra.gov.au/Publications/Procedures).

The Board does not provide individual responses to submissions. Individuals and organisations seeking a personal reply to specific policy or operational questions raised by this consultation paper are invited to write a separate letter to the Chair of the Board at [psychologychair@ahpra.gov.au](mailto:psychologychair@ahpra.gov.au).

Individuals and organisations seeking advice on making a submission to this consultation, such as advice about the format and submission deadline, should send their queries to [psychconsultation@ahpra.gov.au](mailto:psychconsultation@ahpra.gov.au). This inbox will be monitored regularly while public consultation is open.

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## **Attachments:**

**Draft: Guidelines for supervisors**

**Draft: Guidelines for supervisor training providers**

## Overview of consultation

### Revised guidelines for supervisors and supervisor training providers

#### Summary

1. The role of the Psychology Board of Australia (the Board) is to work with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) and other National Boards to achieve the objectives of the [National Registration and Accreditation Scheme](#) (the National Scheme), in accordance with the guiding principles of the scheme. To ensure continued relevance in a dynamic regulatory environment, the Board carries out regular review of all its registration standards, guidelines and policies.
2. The aim of this review is to streamline the Board's supervision documents, ensure continued relevance of the requirements for supervisors and supervisor training providers, and identify opportunities for improvement.
3. In this public consultation the Board is seeking input from key stakeholders on proposed amendments to the:
  - *Guidelines for supervisors and supervisor training providers*
  - *Policy on refusing or revoking Board-approved supervisor status*, and
  - *Policy on the revocation of Board-approved supervisor training provider status*.
4. The Board proposes to separate the guidelines into two, one for supervisors and one for supervisor training providers (changes outlined below in 'Discussion of the proposal'). The revocation policies would then be incorporated into the associated guideline, reducing the number of documents and making it easier for registrants and interested parties to locate relevant information.
5. The Board is committed to protecting the public by ensuring that only practitioners who are suitably trained and qualified to practice psychology competently and ethically are registered. The Board has established competencies required for general registration as a psychologist, and for area of practice endorsement (AoPE). The Board requires individuals seeking general registration or AoPE to complete a period of supervised practice, including overseas qualified applicants and those returning to psychology practice after a break.
6. Supervisors play a crucial role in helping the Board achieve its commitment to protect the public through the development and assessment of competence in those seeking general registration or AoPE. In recognition of this important role, the Board requires supervisors to be proficient in the area of professional practice in which the supervisee is engaged; and to acquire and maintain competencies specific to providing supervision.
7. The Board established a nationally consistent competency-based approach to supervisor training in 2013 with the introduction of the current *Guidelines for supervisors and supervisor training providers*. The Board believes that for the most part the requirements for supervisors and supervisor training providers are appropriate and working well. The Board has identified some improvements that could be made in this review, such as simplification of the arrangements by combining the current Board-approved supervisor ('BAS') categories into one (all except registrar program principal supervisor) and aligning their registration requirements. The Board invites comment on its draft revised *Guidelines for supervisors* and draft revised *Guidelines for supervisor training providers*.
8. This paper includes an overview of the changes proposed to each draft guideline. There are also specific questions about the guidelines which you may wish to address in your response.
9. This review will not result in any changes to Board registration standards. These guidelines relate to obtaining and maintaining Board-approved supervisor status. The specific supervision requirements for the different pathways to general registration and endorsement of registration are set out in other Board registration standards, guidelines, and policies.

## Purpose of this consultation:

10. The purpose of this consultation is to:

- provide stakeholders with an opportunity to consider whether the proposal could have any impact on them or the broader regulatory environment, now or in the future
- provide stakeholders with an opportunity to suggest improvements that will provide for increased public protection and directly contribute to achievements of the objectives of the National Law
- identify any existing or potential operational, workforce or legal impacts or barriers to adopting and implementing the revised guidelines
- provide stakeholders with an opportunity to suggest improvements to the presentation of information, and
- meet the consultation requirements of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (the [National Law](#)).

## Legislation and regulatory principles

11. In the research and development phase of this review, the Board has carefully considered the objectives and guiding principles of the National Law.

12. The first consideration in every Board decision is the health and safety of the Australian public. All actions taken by the Board must fall within its functions assigned under the National Law. Board decisions often need to find a balance between two or more objectives or principles, such as facilitating high quality education and training of health practitioners while ensuring standards are not set too high so as to inhibit the continuous development of the workforce to meet public demand for psychology services.

13. In this consultation the relevant sections of the National Law are:

- Section 3 – Objectives and guiding principles – in particular:
  - (2)(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
  - (2)(c) to facilitate the provision of high quality education and training of health practitioners
  - (2)(d) to facilitate the rigorous and responsive assessment of overseas-trained health practitioners
  - (3)(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.
- Section 35 provides for the functions of a National Board, which is to:
  - (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.
- Section 39 allows a National Board to develop and approve codes and guidelines to provide guidance to the health practitioners it registers; and about other matters relevant to exercising its functions.
- Section 40 requires that if a Board develops a standard or a code or a guideline, it must ensure that there is wide-ranging consultation about its content.
- Section 41 allows that an approved registration standard for a profession, or a code or guideline approved by a National Board, is admissible in proceedings under the National Law or the law of a co-regulatory jurisdiction against a registered practitioner as evidence of what constitutes appropriate professional conduct or practice for the profession.
- Part 7 – Registration of health practitioners – in particular:
  - Section 52 – Eligibility for general registration
  - Section 53 – Qualifications for general registration
  - Section 99 – Application for endorsement

14. To guide decision-making in accordance with the National Law, the Board together with AHPRA and the other National Boards has endorsed a set of [Regulatory principles for the National Scheme](#). The principles encourage a responsive, risk-based approach to regulation across all professions in the National Scheme.

The Board has carefully considered these principles in the research and development phase of this review, and has found the following principles particularly relevant:

- Principle 2: We protect the health and safety 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.
- Principle 5: In all areas of our work we:
  - identify the risks that we are obliged to respond to
  - assess the likelihood and possible consequences of the risks, and
  - respond in ways that are proportionate and manage risks so we can adequately protect the public.

This does not only apply to the way in which we manage individual practitioners but in all of our regulatory decision-making, including in the development of standards, policies, codes and guidelines.

- Principle 6: When we take action about practitioners, we use the minimum regulatory force appropriate to manage the risk posed by their practice, to protect the public. Our actions are designed to protect the public and not to punish practitioners.
- Principle 7: Community confidence in health practitioner regulation is important. Our response to risk considers the need to uphold professional standards and maintain public confidence in the regulated health professions.

## **Review of *Guidelines for supervisors and supervisor training providers***

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### **Background**

15. The [National Law](#) states that a National Board may develop and approve codes and guidelines to provide guidance to the practitioners it registers, and about other matters relevant to the exercise of its functions. One of those functions is deciding the requirements for registration or endorsement of registration in the profession, including the arrangements for supervised practice.
16. Before the National Scheme, which started in 2010, a number of different supervision models existed across Australia with supervisors falling under their respective state and territory codes of professional conduct and ethics requiring psychologists to practice within their competencies.
17. The *Guidelines for supervisors and supervisor training providers* (the current guidelines) came into effect on 1 July 2013 and introduced a nationally consistent requirement that psychologists complete competency-based supervision training before becoming a supervisor, and update that training every five years. To complement this, the guidelines also set out requirements for supervisor training providers, including that they obtain and maintain approval from the Board and report training outcomes on an ongoing basis.

### **Options statement**

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

#### **Option 1 – Status quo**

19. Option 1 proposes to continue with the current documents with no changes:

- *Guidelines for supervisors and supervisor training providers*
- *Policy on refusing or revoking Board-approved supervisor status*, and
- *Policy on the revocation of Board-approved supervisor training provider status*.

20. The current guidelines and two policies are available on the [Board's website](#).

#### **Option 2 – Two new guidelines**

21. Option two involves separating the current guidelines into two – the *Guidelines for supervisors* and the *Guidelines for supervisor training providers* – and revising their content. A key proposed change is simplifying the arrangements by combining the current Board-approved supervisor categories into one (all except registrar program principal supervisor) and aligning their registration requirements. Other changes are outlined in the next section – ‘Discussion of the proposal’.
22. This option also proposes retiring the stand-alone *Policy on refusing or revoking Board approved supervisor status* and incorporating an updated version of it into the new *Guidelines for supervisors*; and retiring the stand-alone *Policy on the revocation of Board-approved supervisor training provider status* and incorporating an updated version of it into the new *Guidelines for supervisor training providers*.

#### **Preferred option**

23. The Board prefers Option 2.

## Discussion of the proposal

24. The Board would like your comments and feedback on the issues discussed below. Feedback on other issues or ideas for the guidelines that are not specifically discussed are also welcome, provided they are within scope of this consultation.

### Guidelines for supervisors

#### General changes

25. A number of general changes have been made throughout the document to update and simplify content, including:

- Updating information and definitions to match other Board documents that have been developed or updated since the current guidelines were developed.
- Incorporating content from the Board's [Frequently Asked Questions webpage](#) and the *Policy on refusing or revoking Board-approved supervisor status*, to ensure access to all relevant information in one document.
- Removing content that will no longer be relevant, in particular the transition arrangements for those who became Board-approved supervisors prior to the current guidelines commencing.
- Revising the language and structure of the document to make it shorter and easier to understand.

#### Board-approved supervisor (BAS) categories

26. The Board is proposing to simplify the current arrangements in relation to BAS categories. There are currently 10 BAS categories with differing registration requirements that must be met before applying to the Board for that category (and before performing the relevant supervisory role). The current arrangements are set out in the following table:

Current BAS category	Current registration requirement
1. 4+2 internship secondary supervisor 2. 5+1 internship secondary supervisor 3. Registrar program secondary supervisor 4. Working in addition to higher degree placements 5. Re-entry programs 6. Transitional programs	To qualify for these categories the psychologist must have held <b>general registration for at least two years</b> .  Note: Categories 4, 5 and 6 are not mentioned in the current guidelines as the requirement that these programs be supervised by a Board-approved supervisor were established after the current guidelines were developed. In the interim, these categories have been treated the same as those that have the minimum registration requirements.
7. 4+2 internship principal supervisor 8. 5+1 internship principal supervisor	To qualify for these categories the psychologist must have held <b>general registration for at least three years</b> .
9. Higher degree placement supervisor (excluding fifth year in 5+1 pathway) 10. Registrar program principal supervisor	To qualify for these categories the psychologist must have held <b>endorsement in the relevant area of practice for at least two years</b> .

27. The Board does not propose to change any of the programs that require supervision by a Board-approved supervisor. These requirements are set by other Board standards, guidelines, and policies, not by the supervisor guidelines. The Board does, however, receive feedback from AHPRA staff and external stakeholders that the various BAS categories are complicated and administratively burdensome, and that there is often little benefit arising from distinguishing between the different types. In response to this feedback the Board has considered how it might simplify the arrangements, in particular where it could combine BAS categories. To combine BAS categories, their registration requirements need to be aligned as appropriate.

28. The draft guidelines propose combining the existing BAS categories into one category (all except registrar program principal supervisors) requiring three years' general registration. The proposed arrangements compared to the current arrangements are displayed in the following table.

<b>Current BAS category</b>	<b>Current registration requirement</b>	<b>Proposed BAS category</b>	<b>Proposed registration requirement</b>
1. 4+2 internship secondary supervisor 2. 5+1 internship secondary supervisor 3. Registrar program secondary supervisor 4. Working in addition to higher degree placements 5. Re-entry programs 6. Transitional programs	The psychologist must have held general registration for at least <b>two years</b> .	Board-approved supervisor (or 'BAS')	The psychologist must have held <b>general registration for at least three years</b> .
7. 4+2 internship principal supervisor 8. 5+1 internship principal supervisor	The psychologist must have held general registration for at least <b>three years</b> .		No change
9. Higher degree placement supervisor (excluding fifth year in 5+1 pathway)	The psychologist must have held <b>endorsement in the relevant area of practice for at least two years</b> .		The psychologist must have held <b>general registration for at least three years</b> .
10. Registrar program principal supervisor	The psychologist must have held <b>endorsement in the relevant area of practice for at least two years</b> .	No change	No change

29. To merge the first nine of the BAS categories the registration requirements will need to be lifted for some categories from two to three years' general registration. The current guidelines only refer to secondary supervisors being approved after two years of general registration. Since the current guidelines were introduced, the Board has established requirements that other programs be supervised by a Board-approved supervisor (BAS categories 4, 5 and 6 in the table). In the interim, these categories have been treated the same as those that have the minimum registration requirements.
30. AHPRA data shows that since the current guidelines came into effect in July 2013, 90 per cent of initial applications for BAS status have been from psychologists who have held general registration for more than three years. Two-thirds of psychologists are waiting more than four years before becoming a Board-approved supervisor. Before the National Scheme some States and Territories required between three and five years of registration as a psychologist prior to becoming a supervisor.
31. The Board considers moving to three years for all categories (except registrar principal) appropriate in order to achieve the benefits of simplifying the supervisor requirements while continuing to ensure supervisors have sufficient proficiency in the general registration competencies before seeking to develop and assess these competencies in others.
32. When the Board developed the current guidelines, the accreditation standards were yet to be updated to account for the National Scheme and regulated areas of practice endorsement.<sup>1</sup> Now that the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC) has completed its review of the accreditation standards, the Board has determined that it is now appropriate to remove the endorsement requirements from its guidelines and allow this matter to be addressed through the accreditation mechanism. Consistent with

<sup>1</sup> The standards required higher degree supervisors to be eligible for membership of the appropriate Australian Psychological Society (APS) College, and have at least two years full-time relevant experience.

the Board's supervision requirements for all pathways to general registration, higher degree placement supervisors will still need to be Board-approved supervisors, meaning they must hold general registration for three years and complete supervisor training to be approved. Higher degree providers are responsible for ensuring they meet any additional placement supervisor requirements set out in the [accreditation standards](#).

33. With the proposed single BAS category encompassing several programs, as part of their ethical obligation to practise within scope of competence, supervisors will need to ensure they have the relevant expertise in the area of practice in which they supervise, and are familiar with the Board's guidelines and policies about the particular program they are supervising.
34. No change is proposed to the current requirement for registrar program principal supervisors. They will still need to hold endorsement in the relevant area of practice for two years before applying for that BAS category. This requirement is set in the Board's *Guidelines for Area of Practice Endorsements*.<sup>2</sup> The Board notes that the competencies developed by psychologists during their registrar program are distinct from those developed for general registration and are specific to that area of practice. The Board is of the view that two years of registration with endorsement in the relevant area of practice ensures the principal supervisor, responsible for at least 50 per cent of supervision required in the registrar program, is proficient in the area of practice competencies.
35. The effect of this is that one additional BAS category will remain – 'registrar principal'. Retaining this category will continue to allow users of the online [list of Board-approved supervisors](#) to search for a registrar program principal supervisor with their selected endorsement.
36. If the new BAS categories are supported by stakeholders, the Board will communicate the changes and details of its implementation plan to supervisors and all psychologists to ensure the changes are understood.
37. In addition to these BAS category changes, the Board has added clarity to the draft guidelines around recognition of overseas registration and experience. Specifically, individuals holding equivalent overseas registration or licensure (as assessed by the Board) for three years may apply for BAS status after completing the required Board-approved supervisor training. Individuals that are granted endorsement in Australia may apply to become a principal registrar program supervisor if they have held the equivalent of that endorsement overseas (as assessed by the Board) for at least two years and if they have completed the required Board-approved supervisor training.

### **Supervisor training**

38. The Board considers the current supervisor training arrangements are working well and should continue. The draft guidelines continue to require practitioners to complete a three-part full training program before becoming a Board-approved supervisor, and at least one master class every five years to maintain that BAS status.
39. The practice of supervision continues to be increasingly recognised as a distinct professional competency in psychology, with wide recognition that this competency is effectively developed and maintained through formal education and training (American Psychological Association (APA), 2015; Falender, Burnes, & Ellis, 2013; Falender, Ellis, & Burnes, 2013; Falender & Shafranske, 2017; Watkins 2012). Supervisor training is being increasingly advocated and adopted internationally, for instance, in the USA (APA, 2015); New Zealand (New Zealand Psychologists Board, 2017); Canada (Hadjistavropoulos, Kehler, & Hadjistavropoulos, 2010); and the UK (British Psychological Society, 2017).
40. The Board is of the view that mandatory training will continue to reduce the risks associated with poor quality supervision. Effective supervision safeguards those receiving services from developing psychologists. It also helps to ensure supervisees have developed the required competencies before becoming registered, gatekeeping and promoting community confidence in the psychology profession. The Board considers that any costs associated the minimum training requirements to obtain and maintain BAS status continues to be outweighed by the benefits to the public from ensuring new and developing

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<sup>2</sup> The Board consulted on a revision to the AoPE standards and guidelines in early 2016, which proposed to retain this requirement for principal supervisors. The Board is now progressing the next stage of this review, which has been on hold until the completion of the accreditation standards review.

psychologists receive supervision from sufficiently experienced and appropriately trained professionals in their field of practice.

41. Outcome data, which has been collected from the Board's approved supervisor training providers since early 2014, shows that both the full training and master classes are evaluated very highly by participants. The Board monitors and periodically reviews the performance of the training providers and is satisfied with the quality of training delivered to-date.
42. The current guidelines refer to full training and master classes being able to be counted towards general registration continuing professional development (CPD), but not CPD for an area of practice endorsement. The Board proposes to remove all references to CPD from the guidelines, enabling supervisors to determine if any full training or master classes they complete is relevant to an appropriate goal set out in their annual learning plan.

### **Supervisor competencies**

43. The Board proposes to remove the first competency listed in the current guidelines. While proficient knowledge and understanding of the profession is a fundamental competency for providing supervision, this competence is demonstrated by the supervisor meeting the Board's general registration standard (for three years) prior to applying for BAS status. By removing this competency the focus of the remaining competencies is on those that are developed and enhanced through supervisor training and practice.
44. The Board has reviewed the remaining competencies and made some updates to align them with current research and international best-practice (APA, 2015; Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Falender et al., 2013; Falender & Shafranske, 2017). Updates include:
  1. Knowledge of and skills in effective supervision practices – language changes and minor content updates to the description.
  2. Knowledge of and ability to develop and manage the supervisory relationship – the addition of two dot points to this description to align with internationally adopted best-practice: 'Interpersonal competence, including communication skills and demonstrating empathy and respect' and 'Acknowledging and effectively managing the power differential in the supervisory relationship.'
  3. Ability to assess the psychological competencies of the supervisee – language changes and content updates to the description, including the addition of 'Encouraging supervisee self-reflectivity and promoting meta-competence.'
  4. Capacity to evaluate the supervisory process – language changes and minor content updates to the description, including deleting 'Demonstrated skills in reflective practice' due to sufficient coverage in other competencies.
  5. Awareness of and attention to diversity renamed 'Cultural responsiveness in supervision' – content updated to reflect internationally adopted best-practice and terminology.
  6. Ability to address the legal and ethical considerations – the name has been shortened and the description expanded to cover regulatory requirements and their purpose (to protect the public), adding 'knowledge of limits of competence and how they should be managed' and emphasising self-care.

### **Other requirements**

45. In this section of the revised guidelines, the Board has clarified its expectation that supervisors understand and adhere to, and ensure their supervisee understands and adheres to, the Board's [standards, codes, guidelines, and polices](#).
46. This section contains further guidance for supervisors about their various obligations under the National Law. There is no change to the current expectations of supervisors, rather, the Board has gathered relevant information and added it to the guidelines for clarity and to improve understanding of the various supervisor responsibilities and obligations.

### **Policy on refusing or revoking BAS status**

47. The Appendix of the draft guidelines reflects the Board's current policy, which is set out in the current guidelines and expanded on in the separate stand-alone *Policy on refusing or revoking Board-approved supervisor*. No change to the current policy is proposed other than clarifying how the policy has been implemented by AHPRA since its inception and the removal of passive language. The Board has also revised the language and simplified the content, making it shorter and easier understand.

## **Guidelines for supervision training providers**

### **General changes**

48. A number of general changes have been made throughout the document to update and simplify content, including:
- Incorporating content from the Board's *Policy on the revocation of Board-approved supervisor training provider status* and summarising content from documentation provided to Board-approved providers (for example, the application packs published when the Board has conducted expression of interest processes and the 'manual' issued to Board-approved providers).
  - Revising the language and structure of the document to make it easier to navigate and understand.
49. These guidelines are different to other Board guidelines in that they set out requirements for training providers rather than for individual practitioners. Currently, the Board has 17 approved supervisor training providers, nine of which provide full training to new supervisors and all of which deliver master classes. These providers were approved after July 2013, meaning that since the current guidelines came into effect the Board has refined its application processes and ongoing procedures for approved providers. The Board is of the view that there would be little benefit in detailing these operational procedures and processes in the guidelines. It proposes to continue making this information available when and to whom it is relevant, for example, in the application pack when conducting an expression of interest for training provider approval and in the 'manual' issued to approved providers detailing ongoing procedures and processes. The Board has added some extra detail to the draft guidelines for transparency, and where it considers it will be of interest to parties considering delivering supervisor training in the future.

### **Changes to supervisor competencies**

50. The Board has proposed updates to the supervisor competencies (detailed above). The current approval period for Board-approved supervisor training providers ends 31 December 2018. Should the new guidelines be implemented during 2018, the Board will not expect current providers to update their curriculums to align with any revised competencies within the current approval period.
51. The Board will be conducting an expression of interest process in 2018 for providers interested in delivering supervisor training in the next five-year approval period, starting 1 January 2019. The Board will expect applications from interested providers to reflect current best practice in supervision and supervision training, and to acknowledge and incorporate any updates to the Board's guidelines (e.g. new supervisor competencies).

### **Supervisor training**

52. As detailed above in relation to the review of the *Guidelines for supervisors*, the Board considers the current supervisor training arrangements are working well and should continue.
53. The 'Structure and content of training' section of the guidelines has been updated primarily to reflect how Board-approved supervisor training providers have operationalised aspects of the training since the guidelines were developed. As such, this content should largely reflect guidance provided by the Board to approved providers (e.g. in the 'manual') over the last few years which is being made explicit in the guidelines.
54. The Board is proposing that training participants prepare a written reflection (including a self-evaluation) of their recorded supervision session and submit to the training provider, alongside the recording. The Board acknowledges that the majority full training providers already include this reflective exercise in Part 3, and is proposing to formalise this by adding it to the description of training requirements in the guidelines.
55. The reflection is not intended to be a complex or onerous exercise. Psychologists intending to count the training toward their CPD will already be completing a written reflection in their CPD journal. The Board considers the reflection exercise will reinforce learning from the full training program and provide further opportunity to integrate supervisor-specific knowledge and skills. Other than a reflection on the demonstration of relevant supervisor competencies, the Board does not intend to be prescriptive about what providers should require in the reflection task and notes that it will depend on the provider's curriculum for Parts 1 and 2 of full training. As with the rest of the training programs, it will be up to providers to develop task requirements and any marking processes and criteria.

56. Should revised guidelines be introduced in 2018 and the proposal to introduce a reflection is formally introduced, the Board would not expect current training providers that aren't already doing this task to update their programs in this approval period (ending 31 December 2018). Expressions of interest to deliver training to supervisors in 2019 to 2023, due to be commence in mid-2018, will reflect the latest version of the guidelines. Further information will be made available to providers and prospective providers at the commencement of the expression of interest process.
57. The Board has made explicit in the draft guidelines that providers may give participants a maximum of three attempts to pass Part 3 of the training. If a psychologist fails on three occasions they will be expected to complete Part 1 and Part 2 again (with the same or different provider) before attempting Part 3 again. The number of attempts is consistent with the Board's policy for the National Psychology Exam.
58. The Board is proposing to extend the deadline for completing Part 3 from three to six months following completion of Part 2 (skills training). This is in response to feedback from approved training providers that some people are withdrawing from the full training program due to difficulty meeting this deadline. The Board considers that allowing more than 6 months will jeopardise the ability to put knowledge and skills gained in Parts 1 and 2 into practice. The Board currently requires providers to have policies in place to allow extensions to this deadline in special circumstances (e.g. illness) and is proposing to make this requirement explicit in the guidelines.
59. The draft guidelines propose to allow for the delivery of master class training to rural/remote-based participants via videoconference technology, provided other guideline requirements are met. If providers take up this option, it will make it easier for rural/remote-based supervisors to refresh their training and maintain BAS status.

#### **Policy on revoking approval**

60. The Appendix of the draft guidelines replaces the Board's current stand-alone *Policy on the revocation of Board-approved supervisor training provider status*. The Board has revised the language and simplified the content, making it easier to read and understand. Substantive changes to the policy are not proposed, other than enhanced clarity and the removal of passive language.

#### **Other**

61. The Board is not proposing any other changes to the requirements for supervisor training providers that are substantially different to the existing arrangements.

#### **Potential benefits and costs of the proposal – both guidelines**

62. The benefits of the preferred option, adopting the two new guidelines and retiring the two stand-alone revocation policies, include:
  - Easier-to-locate information set out in plain, unambiguous language – making it easier to understand the requirements for supervisors and supervisor training providers (and those interested in becoming supervisors/providers), contributing to better public protection.
  - Simpler, more flexible requirements for supervisors, in particular reducing regulatory burden and complexity for both registrants and AHPRA by removing multiple BAS categories.
  - Continuing to strike an appropriate balance between protecting the public and registrant impact.
63. Costs of the preferred option are:
  - Board-approved supervisors and their employers, supervisor training providers, those interested in becoming supervisors/providers, AHPRA staff, and the regional psychology boards will need to become familiar with changes to the guidelines.
  - Removing the option to apply for BAS status after holding general registration for two years, which is currently an option for some BAS categories and is being taken-up by less than 10 per cent of new supervisors (~50 registrants per year) (moving to three years allows the benefits of merging BAS categories to be realised, which include administrative cost savings).
  - Costs of managing the development phase of the review, the consultation process, and (if approved) implementing the new guidelines. These activities are primarily undertaken by AHPRA staff with oversight and support from the Board; these costs are already accounted for in the Board's budget and will have no impact on registration fees.

- There may be a period of transition to the revised guidelines. For instance, AHPRA's IT systems and processes that support the current BAS arrangements (the BAS categories, the online searchable list of supervisors, and the self-service supervisor portal) may take time to be updated to reflect the new arrangements.

### **Estimated impact of the revised guidelines**

64. There are no changes proposed to core components of the supervisor and supervisor training provider arrangements. Supervisors will still be required to complete supervisor training before becoming a Board-approved supervisor, and to update their training every five years. Therefore, the Board anticipates there will be limited impacts on practitioners, business, and other stakeholders arising from the guideline review.
65. Perhaps the most significant change is combining multiple BAS categories into one. This is to make the supervisor requirements less complicated and administratively burdensome for practitioners and AHPRA. This change is not expected to decrease the quality of supervision provided or the quality or safety of services available to the public. Those registrants intending to apply for BAS status after holding general registration for two years will have to wait three under the revised guidelines, however, this option is currently only available for some BAS categories and is only being used by 10 per cent of new supervisors (~50 registrants per year).
66. Implementing the revised guidelines would not require supervisees to make changes to their supervisor arrangements.
67. Training providers would not be required to update their curriculum to align with the revised guidelines if they are implemented within the current provider approval cycle (before December 2018).
68. The Board considers the draft guidelines, both for supervisors and for supervisor training providers, are more user-friendly and better communicate the Board's requirements.

### **Review timeframes**

69. When the Board developed its initial suite of registration standards and guidelines it agreed that it would review them every three years. This was considered an appropriate timeframe as it was considered a review of the new requirements should occur as soon as possible, while still allowing them to be sufficiently tested.
70. Moving forward, the Board expects less regular reviews of guidelines will be sufficient as they are refined and improved through their initial review/s. The Board has a responsibility to ensure efficient and effective operation of the scheme, which is fully funded by registration fees. This requires finding a balance between regular reviews of Board publications, in accordance with good regulatory practice, and ensuring that resources are not overcommitted to cyclical reviews.
71. The review period must be sufficient for:
  - proposals to be well researched
  - for a rigorous and wide-ranging consultation process to occur (including appropriate consultation with government), and
  - new and revised requirements 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 *Guidelines for supervisors* and *Guidelines for supervisor training providers* will begin within five years of their implementation. The Board may decide to review the documents earlier if necessary to ensure their continued relevance.

### **General questions for consideration**

72. The Board invites feedback on the following questions. You may choose to answer one, some or all of these in your submission.
  1. Which option do you prefer – the status quo or the (two) new guidelines?
  2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of moving from the current guidelines and revocation policies to the draft guidelines?

3. Are there other specific impacts (positive or negative) from the draft guidelines that need to be considered? This may include impacts from the proposed combining of BAS categories and the associated alignment of the eligibility criteria.
4. Is the content and structure of the draft guidelines helpful, clear, relevant and workable?
5. Is there any content that needs to be added to, deleted from, or changed in the draft guidelines?
6. From your perspective, are there specific issues that are not addressed in this review that should be? This may include impacts on workforce or access to health services.
7. Do you have any other comments on the proposal?

### **Next steps**

73. The Board will consider the consultation feedback on the draft guidelines before finalising the proposal and implementing new guidelines.

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# Statement of assessment

Psychology Board of Australia's statement of assessment against AHPRA's *Procedures for development of registration standards, codes and guidelines* and the *COAG Principles for best practice regulation*

- **Guidelines for supervisors**
- **Guidelines for supervisor training providers**

The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) has produced the document *Procedures for the development of registration standards, codes and guidelines* which are available at: [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au). These procedures have been developed by AHPRA in accordance with section 25(c) 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 (the National Scheme) operates in accordance with good regulatory practice.

Below is the Board's assessment of the proposal to revise the current guidelines 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**

The Board considers that the draft guidelines meet the objectives and guiding principles of the National Law.

Supervisors play an important role in the education and training of developing psychologists. The requirements in the draft guidelines will ensure these psychologists develop the competencies required for general registration (or for area of practice endorsement) under the supervision of sufficiently experienced professionals who demonstrate competence in supervision through high-quality supervision training. This will provide for the protection of the public by helping ensure only practitioners who are suitably trained and qualified to practise in a competent and ethical manner are registered.

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

The Board is undertaking wide-ranging consultation on the proposed revisions to the *Guidelines for supervisors and supervisor training providers* in accordance with the consultation framework set out in AHPRA's *Consultation process of National Boards* which is available at: [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au). This review does not include a review of any of the Board's registration standards.

This preliminary consultation includes consultation with other National Boards on the proposal, including consideration of opportunity for collaboration on matters of shared interest.

Following preliminary consultation, the Board will ensure that there is public exposure of its proposals and opportunity for public comment by undertaking public consultation. This includes the publication of this consultation paper and attachments (including the two draft guidelines) on the website and inviting feedback from stakeholders and interested parties..

The Board will take into account the feedback it receives from preliminary and public consultation when finalising its proposals.

## **3. The proposal takes into account the COAG Principles for best practice regulation**

In developing the two draft guidelines for consultation to replace the current *Guidelines for supervisors and supervisor training providers* and two associated revocation policies, 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 burden 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 for the development of registration standards, codes and guidelines.

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

The Board considers that its proposal is the best option for achieving the stated purpose, which is to continue ensuring that only practitioners who are suitably trained and qualified to practise psychology competently and ethically are registered. Supervisors play a crucial role in process through the development and assessment of supervisee competence. Requiring them to have three years' experience and complete competency-based supervision training will enable them to perform that role more effectively. The requirements for supervisor training providers help ensure the training that supervisors receive is equipping them with necessary knowledge and skills to provide effective, competency-based supervision to developing psychologists.

The guidelines support various other Board standards, guidelines and policies which require supervision by Board-approved supervisors. The Board has taken into account research, its regulatory experiences, regulatory principles, and feedback from key stakeholders in this guideline review.

The Board considers the revisions to the existing arrangements proposed in the draft revised guidelines will have limited impact on the profession. These impacts are significantly outweighed by the benefits of continuing to provide the same high standard of public protection and providing clearer, simpler guidance for both supervisors and supervisor training providers.

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

As the proposal would not involve substantive changes to supervisor requirements, the revised guidelines are not expected contribute to any unnecessary restriction of competition among health practitioners. Supervisors may receive payment for the supervision services they provide. Currently, practitioners can qualify for some BAS categories after holding general registration for two years. The proposal is to combine BAS categories and make three years the minimum qualifying requirement (except for one additional category, 'registrar principal supervisor', which will retain existing qualifying requirements). The Board does not consider this unreasonable as the change will allow substantial simplification the requirements and reduce regulatory burden for practitioners and administrative complexity and cost for AHPRA (funded by registration fees).

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

The Board considers the proposal of revised *Guidelines for supervisors* and *Guidelines for supervisor training providers* will not result in any unnecessary restriction of consumer choice. The revisions increase flexibility for supervisees and supervisors, which should flow through to increased choice for consumers of psychology services. For instance:

- While supervisees in the relevant pathways can continue to confirm their supervisor is Board-approved (via the online [list of Board-approved supervisors](#)), the removal of BAS categories will mean they don't need to check if the supervisor is approved for the particular program they are completing (with the exception of registrars looking for a principal supervisor).
- The draft guidelines for supervisor training providers allow the delivery of master class training via videoconference if other guideline requirements are met. If providers take up this option, it will make it easier to rural and remote based supervisors to refresh their training and maintain BAS status.

**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**

The Board has considered the overall costs of the revised *Guidelines for supervisors* and *Guidelines for supervisor training providers* to members of the public, registrants and governments. It has concluded that there is not likely to be any significant costs involved in the revision and implementation of the revised guidelines. The costs of consulting on and implementing the new guidelines will be absorbed using current resources and will not result in any costs to members of the public or government.

The Board considers that any burden imposed on practitioners in meeting the minimum registration and training requirements to obtain and maintain BAS status continue to be outweighed by the benefits to the public from ensuring psychologists completing internships, higher degrees (including work in addition to placements), registrar programs, re-entry programs or transitional programs receive supervision from

sufficiently experienced and appropriately trained professionals in their field of practice. The Board also considers the operational costs of administering the supervisor requirements, including assessment of BAS applications, continue to be offset by the public protection benefits that flow from effective supervision's role in ensuring that only practitioners who are suitably trained and qualified to practise as psychologists are registered.

The cost of running the supervisor training program, including conducting expressions of interest, monitoring and analysing outcome reports, and assessing performance of providers, are not expected to increase under the revised guidelines; these costs are accounted for in the Board's current resource allocation. The Board considers these costs continue to be reasonable relative to the benefit from ensuring supervisors receive high-quality, best-practice, competency-based supervisor training and provide effective supervision to psychologists in training.

**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**

The draft guidelines have been written in plain English that will help practitioners (both supervisors and supervisees), employers, and supervisor training providers better understand the Board's requirements. The Board has proposed major changes to the structure of the documents, including splitting the current guidelines into two guidelines and integrating content from the Board's online Frequently Asked Questions and separate policies for revoking supervisor and supervisor training provider approval. The Board has also reviewed the wording of both documents to make the content simpler and shorter. This will make information easier to locate and understand for the relevant audiences.

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

The Board has procedures in place for regular review of all its standards, guidelines and policies which ensures they remain relevant and effective over time. If approved, the Board will review the revised guidelines at least every five years, including an assessment against the objectives and guiding principles in the National Law and the COAG principles for best practice regulation. The Board will review guidelines earlier in response to any issues which arise, or new evidence which emerges, to ensure continued relevance and workability over time.



## Draft: Guidelines for supervisors

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## Contents

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## **1. Introduction**

The Psychology Board of Australia (the Board) is committed to protecting the public by ensuring that only those practitioners who are suitably trained and qualified to practise psychology competently and ethically are registered.

Supervisors play a crucial role in helping the Board achieve its commitment through the development and assessment of Board-established competencies for those seeking general registration or area of practice endorsement. The Board's requirements for supervisors set out in these guidelines recognise the important role that supervisors play in facilitating the ongoing safe practice of psychology.

If you are a Board-approved supervisor or want to become one, you should be familiar with these guidelines, which outline the requirements for psychologists to obtain Board-approved supervisor (BAS) status, and to maintain that BAS status.

The Board established a nationally consistent, competency-based supervisor training in 2013 under the previous version of these guidelines.

Information on the Board's requirements for supervisor training programs, as well as information about becoming a Board-approved supervisor training provider, can be found in the Board's [Guidelines for supervisor training providers](#).

## **2. What is a Board-approved supervisor?**

Registered psychologists completing one of the following programs require supervision by a Board-approved supervisor:

- the [4+2 internship program](#)
- the [5+1 internship program](#)
- placements during an accredited [higher degree program](#)
- working in addition to higher degree placements (see [Policy on working in addition to placements](#))
- the [registrar program](#) leading to endorsement in an area of practice
- the re-entry program after a period of not practising (see [Policy for recency of practice](#)), and
- the [transitional program](#) for overseas qualified applicants.

Supervision provided by someone who is not a Board-approved supervisor will not be recognised by the Board. Registered psychologists must not give the impression they are Board-approved supervisors when they are not. Those undertaking one of the programs mentioned above can check their supervisor has BAS status by searching the [list of Board-approved supervisors](#).

Supervision occurring in other settings does not need to be provided by a Board-approved supervisor, for example, line managers, supervision of a research dissertation, supervision for the purposes of continuing professional development, and peer consultation.

Where supervision is undertaken in compliance with restrictions imposed on a psychologist's registration (conditions or undertakings), approval of supervisors occurs outside the process described in this document (i.e. these supervisors do not need to be a Board-approved supervisor as that term is defined in these guidelines). Such supervision arrangements are approved by the Board on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the issues and circumstances of the particular matter.

## **3. Board-approved supervisor requirements**

### **Professional competence**

To provide effective supervision, you need to have developed proficiency in the area(s) of professional practice in which the supervisee is engaged. For this reason the Board has set the following requirements:

1. Before applying to become a Board-approved supervisor you will need to have held general registration for at least three years (or equivalent overseas registration or licensure).
2. In order to be a principal supervisor of a psychologist in a registrar program you will need to hold an endorsement in the relevant area of practice and you will need to have held this endorsement (or equivalent overseas registration, licensure, or endorsement, as assessed by the Board) for at least two years.

You will not be granted BAS status unless the first requirement has been met. You will not be approved as a registrar program principal supervisor unless the second requirement has been met. You will need apply to the Board if you already have BAS status and subsequently meet the second requirement (and you want to be a registrar program principal supervisor).

Supervision of students completing an accredited higher degree program will need to be provided in accordance with the requirements set out in the accreditation standards for psychology. Under section 50 of the National Law, the accreditation authority must monitor accredited programs and their providers to ensure [accreditation standards](#) continue to be met.

### **Supervisor competencies**

Board-approved supervisors must acquire and maintain competencies specific to providing supervision. The Board's supervisor competencies are as set out in [Table 1](#).

### **Training requirements**

Before applying to become a Board-approved supervisor, you need to complete full training with a Board-approved supervisor training provider. This requirement relates to the development of the supervisor competencies set out above. The full training consists of three parts to be completed in sequence:

- **Part 1 – Knowledge assessment:** Requires at least seven hours of preparatory work (self-study modules, reading and reflection) relating to knowledge of relevant Board codes, guidelines and policies, and knowledge of best-practice supervision. This part is completed by passing an online assessment.
- **Part 2 – Skills training workshop:** Requires at least 12 hours of direct training focusing on the development of practical supervision skills that are relevant to all supervisee training pathways and reflective practice. This part emphasises the integration of knowledge and practical skills.
- **Part 3 – Competency-based assessment and evaluation:** Requires the submission of an electronic recording of a supervision session and a written reflection (including a self-evaluation) of that session. The recording and reflection must be submitted to the training provider within six months of completing Part 2.<sup>3</sup> The training provider will systematically assess the demonstration of supervisor competencies and provide a pass or fail grade and feedback. You may be given three attempts to pass Part 3 before you will be advised to re-complete Parts 1 and 2.

You should not commence the full training program until you have held general registration for 2.5 years, as you cannot apply for BAS status until you have held general registration for three years.

A list of Board-approved supervisor training providers and their contact details are available on the [Board's website](#).

[Section 4](#) of these guidelines contains information about applying for BAS status after you have completed the training. You will need to complete refresher training every five years in order to maintain your BAS status (see [Section 5](#) for details).

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<sup>3</sup> Individual training providers may allow extensions to this timeline in certain circumstances, in accordance with their business policies.

**Table 1: Supervisor competencies**

Competency	Description
1. Knowledge of and skills in effective supervision practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Knowledge of learning processes in supervision, including models, theories and methods of supervision.</li><li>• Establishing competency-based goals and objectives, including contracting, agenda setting, engaging, monitoring, evaluation and record keeping.</li><li>• Facilitating the ongoing development of the supervisee's competencies through a range of interventions including observation, modelling, feedback, micro-skills training and relationship skills training.</li></ul>
2. Knowledge of and ability to develop and manage the supervisory relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establishing and strengthening the supervisory relationship, including knowledge of the stages and development of the supervisory relationship.</li><li>• Reflective supervision practice, including openness to feedback and using peer consultation and supervision of supervision.</li><li>• Ability to identify and manage personal factors, self-disclosure and other issues that affect the supervisory alliance, including addressing problems or ruptures in the supervisory relationship.</li><li>• Interpersonal competence, including communication skills and demonstrating empathy and respect.</li><li>• Acknowledging and effectively managing the power differential in the supervisory relationship.</li></ul>
3. Ability to assess the psychological competencies of the supervisee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Effectively monitoring, assessing and evaluating competencies of the supervisee on an ongoing basis, including knowledge of effective evaluation methods.</li><li>• Encouraging supervisee self-reflectivity and promoting meta-competence</li><li>• Providing effective feedback to the supervisee, including demonstrated skills in communication and critical feedback.</li><li>• Addressing problems related to competencies, including skills in addressing problems related to the supervisee not meeting minimal core competencies.</li></ul>
4. Capacity to evaluate the supervisory process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Knowledge of the supervisory process, including identifying expectations and responsibilities of both the supervisor and supervisee.</li><li>• Encouraging and responding to supervisee and peer feedback to improve supervisory practice.</li></ul>
5. Cultural responsiveness in supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Responsiveness to culture and diversity in the supervisory process and supervisory relationship.</li><li>• Awareness of the impact of diversity when working with a range of clients in a range of services.</li><li>• Attention to the development of cultural responsiveness in supervisees.</li></ul>
6. Ability to address legal and ethical considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understanding ethical principles and regulatory requirements and how they are used to guide professional practice and supervision to protect the public.</li><li>• Knowledge of limits of competence and how they should be managed.</li><li>• Awareness of personal limitations and biases that may affect supervision practice.</li><li>• Attention to and support of self-care.</li></ul>

## **Other requirements**

### **Knowledge of the Board's standards, guidelines and policies**

All psychologists have an obligation to ensure they are familiar with, and practise in accordance with, the Board's [standards, codes, guidelines and policies](#). As a Board-approved supervisor, this is important as you will be responsible for ensuring your supervisees understand the requirements set out in these documents. Depending on the training pathway(s) being undertaken by your supervisee(s), you will need to understand and adhere to the supervision requirements set out in the relevant documents, for instance:

- *Guidelines for the 4+2 internship program*
- *Guidelines for the 5+1 internship program*
- *Policy on working in addition to placements*
- *Guidelines for the National Psychology Examination*
- *Guidelines on area of practice endorsements*
- *Policy for recency of practice, and*
- *Guidelines: transitional programs for overseas qualified applicants.*

### **Mandatory reporting**

As a registered health practitioner you have a mandatory reporting responsibility under the National Law. If in the course of practising your profession you form a reasonable belief that another registered health practitioner has behaved in a way that constitutes notifiable conduct, you must notify AHPRA. Notifiable conduct is defined as:

- practising while intoxicated by alcohol or drugs
- sexual misconduct in the practice of the profession
- placing the public at risk of substantial harm because of an impairment (health issue), and/or
- placing the public at risk because of a significant departure from accepted professional standards.

Further information on what constitutes notifiable conduct and about how to make a mandatory report can be found at [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au).

### **Supervisor responsibility**

As a Board-approved supervisor, you are responsible for your supervisee's practise as outlined in these guidelines and other applicable Board guidelines, and as set out in your arrangement with your supervisee. If the Board is concerned about the health, conduct or performance of the supervisee, the Board may investigate the supervisor if it believes the concerns relate to insufficient or inadequate supervision. The [Appendix](#) sets out circumstances under which BAS status may be revoked by the Board.

### **Managing conflicts of interest**

As a Board-approved supervisor, you must be able to provide an independent report of supervision outcomes and be willing to report to AHPRA immediately if any practice of the supervisee is placing the public at risk. Therefore, you should not provide supervision where any actual or perceived conflicts of interest may undermine the independence of your reporting.

A conflict of interest occurs when a fair-minded observer might reasonably think that your interest may result in a conflict with the proper performance of your duties and responsibilities. Examples of situations that may result in a conflict of interest for Board-approved supervisors include:

- The supervisee is your employer and/or has the ability to direct the supervision.
- You have a shared financial or other interest with the supervisee or your friends or relatives have such an interest.
- You accept a gift or benefit that may be seen as intending to influence how you act as a supervisor.
- You have personal, philosophical, religious, moral or political beliefs or attitudes that could be seen to affect your impartiality.
- You have, or are developing, a personal relationship with the supervisee or their friend or relative that goes beyond the level of a professional working relationship.

- You have been, or are currently, engaged in a close personal or therapeutic relationship with the supervisee.
- Providing reports to the Board or to AHPRA results in your personal gain or advantage (other than receipt of appropriate payment for supervision).

### General duties

As a Board-approved supervisor, you must undertake supervision in good faith, in a financially responsible manner, and with a reasonable degree of care, diligence and skill.

You must not use your position as Board-approved supervisor, or the information that comes to you through this position, to gain an advantage for yourself or someone else. Receipt of appropriate payment for supervision is allowed.

### Duty of confidentiality

Protected information is information that comes to your knowledge through your role as a Board-approved supervisor. You must not disclose protected information unless:

- it is necessary to carry out the supervision and fulfil your obligations as a Board-approved supervisor
- it is required by law, or
- the person the information relates to consents to the disclosure.

All information provided to you, as a Board-approved supervisor, should be securely stored to ensure confidentiality is maintained and destroyed when it is no longer needed to carry out the supervision (unless you are legally required to keep it).

## 4. Applying for BAS status

Once you have completed full training and you have held general registration for three years, you can apply to become a Board-approved supervisor using the *Application to act as a Board-approved supervisor* form ([ABAS-76](#)) on the Board's website. You will need to supply evidence of completing full training, for example, a copy of your certificate of completion.

If approved, you will be granted BAS status for five years. The five years will be calculated from the date you passed component 3 of full training, not from the date you applied for or were granted BAS status.

The Board's policy for refusing or revoking BAS status is set out in the [Appendix](#) of these guidelines.

### List of Board-approved supervisors

The Board publishes a [list of Board-approved supervisors](#) on its website. This allows others to confirm your BAS status. Once you have been granted BAS status, your name, registration number, principal place of practice (suburb and postcode), and BAS expiry date will appear on this list. If you are approved as a registrar program principal supervisor, this will appear on the list, along with your area(s) of practice endorsement. Users can search for a supervisor by name, location and whether or not they are approved as a registrar program principal supervisor for their selected area of practice endorsement.

## 5. Maintaining your BAS status (refresher training)

To maintain your BAS status, you'll need to complete refresher training every five years. The minimum requirement is the completion of a master class with a Board-approved supervisor training provider.

A master class is a competency-based supervisor training workshop requiring at least six hours of direct training and including an assessment component. Master classes may focus on specific topics relevant to supervision, or to supervision in particular areas of practice.

The following training also meets (and exceeds) the Board's refresher training requirement:

- more than one master class
- all three parts of full training
- Parts 1 and 2 of full training, or
- Part 2 of full training.

When deciding whether to complete a master class (the minimum requirement) or training that exceeds the requirement, you may wish to consider the following:

- self-assessment, noting any changes to current work, interests, etc.
- self-assessment against the supervisor competencies
- length of time since you completed full training
- your knowledge of changes to the Board's registration standards, guidelines and policies
- learning outcomes noted in your learning plan for CPD
- feedback from supervisees and peers, and/or
- location and content of supervision being provided.

A list of Board-approved training providers can be located on the [Board's website](#). Please contact the training providers directly for information about the dates and location of training.

Once you have completed refresher training, apply to the Board to maintain your BAS status using the *Application to maintain Board-approved supervisor status* form ([MBAS-76](#)). You will need to supply evidence of completing training that meets the Board's refresher training requirements listed above, for example, a copy of your certificate of completion.

If approved, your BAS status will be extended for five years from the date you completed your refresher training, not from the date you applied to maintain your BAS status.

As set out in the Board's [CPD Guidelines](#), it is recommended that Board-approved supervisors include some additional professional development activities relevant to supervision skills at least every two years, such as peer consultation on supervision, workshops on supervision, or other activities that improve knowledge and skills in relevant areas such as supervision, learning, teaching or mentoring.

## 6. Cancelling your BAS status

If you believe you do not meet the requirements set out in these guidelines, or you otherwise no longer wish to be a Board-approved supervisor, you should cancel your BAS status by writing to AHPRA. You can use the [web enquiry form](#) to do this.

Discontinuing BAS status has significant implications for supervisees. Any supervision provided while not a Board-approved supervisor will not be recognised by the Board as suitable supervision in the training pathways listed in [Section 2](#). Supervisors are responsible for informing any supervisee(s) that their BAS status has been cancelled.

## 7. Review

These guidelines will be reviewed as required, generally every five years.

## 8. Definitions

**AHPRA** means the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency established under section 23 of the National Law.

**Area of practice endorsement** is a means provided for by section 98 of the National Law through which additional qualifications and supervised practice recognised by the Board can be identified to the public, employers, and other users of the public online register of practitioners. Practitioners with an area of practice endorsement have the specific area of practice notated on the public register, and can use the title associated with that area of practice.

**Board** refers to the Psychology Board of Australia established under section 31 of the National Law. The Board delegates some decision-making powers to committees, state and territory or regional boards, or AHPRA.

**Board-approved supervisor** means a supervisor approved by the Board to provide supervision to provisional psychologists in the 4+2 or 5+1 internship program, registered psychologists in accredited higher degree programs, psychologists doing registrar programs leading to an area of practice endorsement, or registered psychologists doing a transitional or re-entry program.

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

**Provisional psychologist** means a person registered as a provisional psychologist under section 62 of the National Law to enable that individual to complete a mandatory period of supervised practise to become eligible for general registration as a psychologist.

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

**Registered psychologist** in this document may refer to a psychologist or a provisional psychologist.

**Registrar program** means a Board-approved supervised practice program for the purpose of gaining an area of practice endorsement.

**Supervisee** means a provisional psychologist doing a 4+2 or 5+1 internship program; a registered psychologist undertaking an accredited higher degree; a psychologist undertaking a registrar program; a registered psychologist with overseas training undertaking a transitional program; or a registered psychologist undertaking a re-entry program after a period of limited or no psychological practise.

**Supervision** is an interactive process between a supervisee and a supervisor. It provides the supervisee with a professionally stimulating and supportive opportunity for growth. Supervision involves a special type of professional relationship in which supportive direction, facilitative activities, and instructive critique is given by the supervisors to help the supervisee achieve their professional goals.

## **Appendix: Policy for refusing or revoking BAS status**

### **Refusal**

The Board can refuse an initial application for BAS status, an application to maintain BAS status, or an application to reinstate BAS status after a period of revocation, if the psychologist:

- has not held general registration for three years (or equivalent overseas registration or licensure).<sup>4</sup>
- does not meet the recency of practice standard
- has not provided sufficient evidence of completing the required Board-approved supervisor training
- has conditions or restrictions on their registration (the Board will consider if the conditions or restrictions, or the relating notification, complaint, or disciplinary matter relates to or affects the provision of supervision), or
- has not completed any remediation required by the Board (e.g. additional training) in the case of a period of BAS-status revocation.

### **Revocation**

A psychologist's BAS status will automatically be revoked by the Board when their registration is:

- discontinued or lapsed
- no longer current
- suspended
- cancelled, or
- surrendered.

A psychologist's BAS status may be revoked by the Board when:

- A panel or tribunal requires or recommends the psychologist does not provide supervision, or recommends that the Board revoke BAS status.
- An impairment is found to be affecting the psychologist's capacity to practise and/or supervise.
- The psychologist fails to meet the requirements or fails to demonstrate the supervisor competencies set out in these guidelines.
- The psychologist has failed to adhere to their responsibilities as a Board-approved supervisor, as outlined in the Board's standards, guidelines and policies. Examples include:
  - inadequate supervision, including insufficient supervision
  - inability to meet the requirements of supervisors as outlined for the relevant training pathway
  - providing supervision that is not appropriate or evidence-based
  - directing the supervisee in practices that are not considered to be evidence-based
  - not managing psychological risk appropriately
  - not ensuring they are accessible to the supervisee
  - not following the Board-adopted code of ethics, and
  - significant or repeated issues with not providing information to the Board or AHPRA regarding supervisees in a professional, competent and timely fashion.
- The psychologist does not meet the Board's registration standards.
- There is a notification relating to the psychologist's sub-standard conduct or performance as a Board-approved supervisor.
- There is a notification made about the psychologist's health, conduct or performance. The Board's decision will take into account the likely impact on the psychologist's capacity or ability to provide supervision. The Board may wait until the conclusion of the notification process before revoking BAS status.
- The psychologist's registration is subject to conditions or restrictions that relates to, affects or is likely to affect their capacity or ability to provide supervision.
- There is an adverse finding about the psychologist's health, conduct or performance, including actions taken under immediate action under Part 8, Division 7 of the National Law (the Board will take into account the likely impact on the psychologist's capacity or ability to provide supervision).

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<sup>4</sup> Note that registration does not have to be held in consecutive years.

The Board may revoke BAS status for a set period of time. The Board may require the psychologist to undertake remedial supervision training instead of, or in addition to, revoking their BAS status.

When the psychologist's BAS status is revoked, they will be removed from the list of Board-approved supervisors. Supervisors will be notified when their BAS status has been revoked. Revocation of BAS status has significant implications for supervisees. Any supervision provided while not a Board-approved supervisor will not be recognised by the Board as suitable supervision in the pathways to registration or endorsement, as listed in Section 2 of these guidelines. Supervisors are responsible for informing their supervisee(s) that their BAS status has been revoked, and for advising AHPRA when they have done so. Supervisees can check a supervisor or prospective supervisor has BAS status by searching the [list of Board-approved supervisors](#).

Psychologists who have had their BAS status revoked may re-apply for BAS status when conditions or restrictions on their registration are removed, when the revocation period is over, or when they have completed any remediation required by the Board.

A psychologist who is dissatisfied with the revocation of their BAS status may request a review of the decision. A request for a review can be made in writing to AHPRA, and this will be considered by the board that made the revocation determination. If the psychologist is not satisfied with that board's response, they can request a second review in writing which will be considered by a board that was not involved in the initial revocation determination.



## Draft: Guidelines for supervisor training providers

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## Contents

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## **1. Introduction**

The Psychology Board of Australia (the Board) is committed to protecting the public by ensuring that only practitioners who are suitably trained and qualified to practise psychology competently and ethically are registered. Supervisors play a crucial role in helping the Board achieve its commitment through the development and assessment of Board-established competencies in those seeking general registration or area of practice endorsement.

The Board's requirements for supervisors, as set out in the [Guidelines for supervisors](#), recognise the important role that supervisors play in facilitating the ongoing safe practice of psychology. The Board requires psychologists to complete competency-based supervisor training before applying for Board-approved supervisor (BAS) status, and refresher training every five years to maintain that BAS status.

### **Who are these guidelines for?**

These guidelines set out the requirements for Board-approved supervisor training providers to obtain and maintain Board approval. If you are a supervisor training provider or wish to become one, you should be familiar with these guidelines. These guidelines support the supervisor requirements set out above by facilitating the provision of high-quality, competency-based training to supervisors.

## **2. Purpose of supervisor training**

This training is to be delivered in the context of psychology regulation in the public interest. The aim is to ensure that developing psychologists receive high-quality supervision and that the public receives psychological services that are safe and of adequate quality.

The purpose of supervisor training is to equip supervisors with the necessary knowledge and skills to provide high-quality supervision to psychologists completing one of the following programs:

- the [4+2 internship program](#)
- the [5+1 internship program](#)
- placements during an accredited [higher degree program](#)
- working in addition to higher degree placements (see [Policy on working in addition to placements](#))
- the [registrar program](#) leading to endorsement in an area of practice
- the re-entry program after a period of not practising (see [Policy for recency of practice](#)), and
- the [transitional program](#) for overseas qualified applicants.

### **Supervisor competencies**

The competencies required of supervisors apply regardless of the pathway their supervisees are enrolled in. The Board's supervisor competencies are set out in [Table 1](#) below.

## **3. How to become a Board-approved supervisor training provider**

The Board will periodically conduct expressions of interest seeking written applications from suitably qualified individuals, consortiums or organisations to provide supervision training in Australia. The Board will assess applications against the requirements outlined in these guidelines and more detailed requirements set out in the application documents made available at the start of the expression of interest process (the 'application pack').

If deemed appropriate, the Board may limit the number of supervisor training providers it approves and will typically approve providers for a set period of time (usually for five years). Providers will need to re-apply after this time if they wish to maintain approval.

The Board uses the term 'approved' rather than 'endorsed' or 'accredited' to ensure that there is no confusion with area of practice endorsement or accreditation functions under the [National Law](#).

Information on the ongoing management of approved providers, including additional guidance and detailed reporting requirements, is made available to approved providers. Approved providers must remain compliant with these guidelines for the duration of their approval period or the Board may revoke its approval (refer to the [Policy for revoking approval of supervisor training providers](#) in the [Appendix](#)).

**Table 1: Supervisor competencies**

Competency	Description
1. Knowledge of and skills in effective supervision practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Knowledge of learning processes in supervision, including models, theories and methods of supervision.</li><li>• Establishing competency-based goals and objectives, including contracting, agenda setting, engaging, monitoring, evaluation and record keeping.</li><li>• Facilitating the ongoing development of the supervisee's competencies through a range of interventions including observation, modelling, feedback, micro-skills training and relationship skills training.</li></ul>
2. Knowledge of and ability to develop and manage the supervisory relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establishing and strengthening the supervisory relationship, including knowledge of the stages and development of the supervisory relationship.</li><li>• Reflective supervision practice, including openness to feedback and using peer consultation and supervision of supervision.</li><li>• Ability to identify and manage personal factors, self-disclosure and other issues that affect the supervisory alliance, including addressing problems or ruptures in the supervisory relationship.</li><li>• Interpersonal competence, including communication skills and demonstrating empathy and respect.</li><li>• Acknowledging and effectively managing the power differential in the supervisory relationship.</li></ul>
3. Ability to assess the psychological competencies of the supervisee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Effectively monitoring, assessing and evaluating competencies of the supervisee on an ongoing basis, including knowledge of effective evaluation methods.</li><li>• Encouraging supervisee self-reflectivity and promoting meta-competence</li><li>• Providing effective feedback to the supervisee, including demonstrated skills in communication and critical feedback.</li><li>• Addressing problems related to competencies, including skills in addressing problems related to the supervisee not meeting minimal core competencies.</li></ul>
4. Capacity to evaluate the supervisory process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Knowledge of the supervisory process, including identifying expectations and responsibilities of both the supervisor and supervisee.</li><li>• Encouraging and responding to supervisee and peer feedback to improve supervisory practice.</li></ul>
5. Cultural responsiveness in supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Responsiveness to culture and diversity in the supervisory process and supervisory relationship.</li><li>• Awareness of the impact of diversity when working with a range of clients in a range of services.</li><li>• Attention to the development of cultural responsiveness in supervisees.</li></ul>
6. Ability to address legal and ethical considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understanding ethical principles and regulatory requirements and how they are used to guide professional practice and supervision to protect the public.</li><li>• Knowledge of limits of competence and how they should be managed.</li><li>• Awareness of personal limitations and biases that may affect supervision practice.</li><li>• Attention to and support of self-care.</li></ul>

#### **4. Board-approved supervisor training provider requirements**

Supervisors must be able to effectively develop and assess the competencies of their supervisees for general registration and/or for area of practice endorsement. Supervisor effectiveness helps the Board achieve its commitment to protect the public by ensuring only those with suitable training and qualifications are able to practise psychology.

Supervisor training must therefore develop discrete abilities that incorporate specific knowledge, skills and attitudes required to perform high-quality professional psychology supervision. The supervisor competencies that supervisor training providers are required to develop in their training programs are set out in [Table 1](#). Supervisor training must adhere to a competency-based model within a framework of best-practice supervision.

##### **Structure and content of training**

Board-approved supervisor training providers deliver:

- initial supervisor training (full training) for psychologists wishing to become a Board-approved supervisor for the first time, and
- refresher (master class) training for supervisors who wish to maintain their BAS status (required every five years).

##### **Full training**

New supervisors are required to complete full training consisting of three parts completed in sequence, detailed below. Different training providers may be approved by the Board to provide some or all of the three parts. This means that psychologists going through full training may enrol with multiple providers to complete the three required parts. This allows choice and flexibility for psychologists, particularly those in regional or rural areas.

The Board requires psychologists hold general registration (or equivalent overseas registration or licensure) for at least 2.5 years before starting full training, as they need to hold general registration for three years before applying for BAS status.

##### **Part 1: Knowledge assessment**

This part is primarily focused on knowledge acquisition. It will comprise of self-study modules and should require at least seven hours of preparatory work including reading relevant materials and reflecting on practice.

Content must include an overview of the administrative requirements of supervision for all pathways to registration and area of practice endorsement (listed in [Section 2](#)), including knowledge of relevant Board standards, guidelines and policies. This component should also assess the understanding of legal and ethical issues relevant to psychology practice and supervision, including the requirement for supervisors to act in accordance with the Board-adopted [Code of ethics](#).

The primary aim of the knowledge assessment is to ensure the new supervisor is aware of the context for supervision within the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme. However, the provider should also use this part to introduce the participant to best-practice supervision readings relevant to skills training.

At the end of Part 1 the participant is required to pass a formal online assessment (e.g. a multiple-choice test) of the self-study modules. This component must be completed and passed before doing the skills training component with the same or different provider.

##### **Part 2: Skills training**

The focus of Part 2 is on the development of supervision skills applicable to all supervisee pathways, including practical skills for evaluating competencies (e.g. using active feedback exercises), and developing reflective supervision practice.

The skills training will comprise a minimum of 12 hours of direct training, typically in the form of a two-day workshop. The workshop should not be a vehicle for knowledge acquisition, which occurs during Part 1, but should integrate knowledge and practice. For example, a focus on how to evaluate competence in practice and how to address concerns with supervisee competence or issues arising in the supervisory

relationship. The training should allow for live practice of supervision skills, immediate trainer and peer feedback, and peer interaction and sharing of experience.

At the end of Part 2 the participant should be prepared to complete the competency-based assessment.

### Part 3: Competency-based assessment and evaluation

To complete the full training program the psychologist needs to submit an electronic (video or audio) recording of a supervision session to the training provider for evaluation and feedback, along with a written reflection (including a self-evaluation) of their demonstration of supervisor competencies (as relevant) in that session.

Providers must conduct a systematic assessment and evaluation of the psychologist's demonstration of supervisory competence and provide feedback on the session and reflection. The provider should only pass participants who have satisfactorily demonstrated the supervisor competencies, as relevant to the session. Providers may give participants a maximum of three attempts to pass this part of the training before failing them and advising them to complete Parts 1 and 2 again before attempting Part 3 again.

The participant must submit their recording and reflection to the provider within six months of completing the skills training, in the form required by the provider. Board-approved supervisor training providers are required to have policies in place for approving extensions to the six month deadline in special circumstances (e.g. participant illness or personal leave).

### Assessment of participants

Thorough assessment of supervisory competence is necessary to ensure that new supervisors are adequately equipped to provide supervision in a credentialing environment. Given the important role of Board-approved supervisors in protecting the public, new supervisors must be assessed across a number of domains using a range of techniques. For the full training, supervisors must be assessed as follows:

- Understanding of administrative, legal and ethical responsibilities of supervisors measured through short answer and/or multiple choice questions (at the end of Part 1).
- Knowledge of supervision principles measured through either multiple-choice test, short-answer examination, interview, or in-class exercises (at the end of Part 1 and during Part 2).
- Supervisory performance measured through assessment of an actual supervision session submitted electronically (Part 3).

Potential supervisors must receive supervision of their supervision, including direct observation and critical feedback through role plays or similar in Part 2, and through feedback on submitted materials in Part 3.

### Master classes

To maintain BAS status, supervisors must complete Board-approved refresher training every five years. The minimum requirement is the completion a master class in supervision. Master classes must:

- run for a minimum of six hours
- include systematic assessment, and
- focus on specific, relevant topics.

Examples of master class topics include:

- dealing with difficult supervision situations
- enhancing supervisee reflective practice
- reflective supervision
- ethical issues in supervision (or ethical issues in supervision in rural settings)
- supervisor legal and regulatory responsibilities
- parallel processes in the supervisory alliance
- evaluating supervisee competence in a specific area of practice endorsement
- providing and receiving feedback
- advanced cultural competency in supervision
- remedial supervision, and
- supervision of supervision.

## Assessment of participants

For the master class training, participant knowledge of supervision principles and/or supervision skills relevant to the topic of the master class are to be assessed and measured through either multiple-choice or short-answer questions, or interview or in-class exercises involving active participation.

## Updating course content

Board-approved providers of full training and master classes are responsible for the ongoing maintenance and update of course content, including reading, presentation and assessment materials. They are required to monitor and incorporate changes to Board standards, guidelines and policies, and to take into account advancements in the field of psychology supervision and supervisor training.

## Outcome reporting

Board-approved supervisor training providers are required to provide evaluation and outcome data to the Board through regular reports and an annual report. Reports may include:

- the name, registration number, and assessment outcome for each participant
- the total number of participants who passed, failed or withdrew
- the date and location/mode of delivery for each workshop
- an evaluation of the training (i.e. strengths and areas to improve) including a consideration of participant feedback
- details of any formal complaints received, and
- details of any curriculum updates.

The Board provides further guidance on these requirements, including reporting templates, to approved supervisor training providers.

Outcome data may be used by the Board to:

- evaluate each training provider against the Board's requirements in these guidelines and in the application documents
- compare training providers to investigate consistency of standards across providers, and
- examine broader issues related to the effectiveness of supervisor training, including commissioning research in this area.

## Location of training

The Board is committed to ensuring national coverage of workshop delivery in both metropolitan and regional areas. The Board encourages applications from providers who are committed to providing full training and master class workshops in regional locations.

The Board will consider approving the delivery of master class training to rural/remote-based participants using videoconference technology if the provider is able demonstrate that the requirements set out in these guidelines can be met, including the effective systematic assessment of participants.

## Credentials of trainers

All trainers must be approved by the Board before they can be involved in course/curriculum development,<sup>5</sup> delivering workshops or assessing competencies of participants.

To be approved, trainers are required to demonstrate theoretical and practical knowledge of current developments in the delivery of supervision, competency-based training, and the Board's standards, codes, guidelines and policies. Trainers must:

- hold general registration as a psychologist
- have qualifications and/or experience in training, and
- demonstrate skills and competence in providing high-quality supervision (the Board will be looking for approximately five years' experience as a Board-approved supervisor).

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<sup>5</sup> Excluding work in preparing an expression of interest application to the Board for approval as a training provider.

The Board may approve non-psychologist trainers where supervision and/or training skills are exemplary (such as supervisors from related professions or trainers with learning and development qualifications). In the case of trainers delivering a master class on a specific topic, the Board may approve a trainer who is not a Board-approved supervisor or a psychologist but has particular expertise in the specific topic covered by the master class.

## General requirements

In addition to developing and delivering competency-based, best-practice supervision training, providers must have adequate resources and processes to deliver, monitor, manage, and report on supervisor training courses. The Board requires training providers to meet the following general requirements concerning their operations:

- having processes in place that support quality assurance, customer service, confidentiality, privacy, and handling of conflict of interest issues
- secure data management systems and adequate technical capacity
- adequate administrative processes and resourcing – capacity to deliver courses; secure payment capability; and applicant screening, enrolment and support
- sophisticated and timely approach to delivering outcome data to the Board
- operating as a business entity (e.g. have a valid ABN/CAN and meet tax requirements)
- financial viability and pricing that is competitive, provides value for money to participants, and is commensurate with the costs of providing training
- the sustainability of the program for the approval period (usually five years), and
- informing the Board of any significant events that could have an impact on the operations over the approval period of Board and affect the provider's ability to comply with these guidelines.

The results of all individual assessments and submitted test and electronic materials should be retained by training providers for five years and made available upon audit or request by the Board. This applies to providers who are no longer approved by the Board.

All Board-approved training providers must act in accordance with the Board's [standards, codes, guidelines, and policies](#), including the *Guidelines for advertising of regulated health services*.

The above requirements are general only. The application pack will provide more detail on the requirements that training providers will need to meet, with further information and guidance provided to Board-approved providers.

## Mandatory reporting

Registered health practitioners have a mandatory reporting responsibility under the [National Law](#). If in the course of practising your profession (for instance, in delivering training) you form a reasonable belief that another registered health practitioner has behaved in a way that constitutes notifiable conduct, you must notify AHPRA. Notifiable conduct is defined as:

- practising while intoxicated by alcohol or drugs
- sexual misconduct in the practice of the profession
- placing the public at risk of substantial harm because of an impairment (health issue), and/or
- placing the public at risk because of a significant departure from accepted professional standards.

Further information on what constitutes 'notifiable conduct' and about how to make a mandatory report can be found at [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au).

## 5. Maintaining Board approval

Throughout the approval period, the Board monitors the performance of training providers and changes made to their supervisor training program. Performance will be monitored through:

- regular outcome and annual reporting by approved providers (the annual report will require providers to declare they are continuing to meet the requirements set in these guidelines and the selection criteria for approval set by the Board during the provider application process)
- requests for major project changes made by approved providers, and
- complaints from participants (direct to AHPRA or notified by the approved training provider).

The Board monitors the performance of each provider throughout the approval period to evaluate each training provider against the requirements in these guidelines and in the application documents. The Board may revoke a provider's approval in accordance with its *Policy for revoking approval of supervision training providers*, set out in the Appendix of these guidelines.

### **Changes to training program**

The Board monitors changes that an approved supervisor training provider wishes to make that would result in their training program being different from the description provided in their application. Providers must inform the Board of major changes to the approved program relating to course development, course delivery or organisation capability.

A change to the approved supervisor training program is considered a major change when it does (or could) adversely affect the approved training provider's ability to meet the requirements set out in these guidelines or the selection criteria detailed in the application pack. The following are examples of major changes that must be reported to the Board before implementation:

- a major change to the curriculum to reflect a change to the framework and/or methods of supervision practice
- adding new training, either full training (or part of) or a master class topic that was not previously approved during the application process
- ceasing to provide a previously approved training program, either full training (or part of) or a master class
- addition of a trainer
- removal of a trainer
- change to program lead (the Board's key contact)
- a change to the financial viability of the training provider such that ongoing provision of training to the same standard is in doubt, or
- an increase in training fees in excess of 10 per cent.

These changes must be communicated to the Board in writing, and must not take place until the Board has approved them in writing.<sup>6</sup> The Board will make available additional guidance on applying for changes to approved providers.

The Board does not need to be informed of minor changes in the course development, course delivery or organisational capability of the approved training provider. A change to the approved supervisor training program is considered minor when it could not adversely affect the approved training provider's ability to meet the requirements set out in these guidelines or the selection criteria detailed in the application pack.

### **6. List of Board-approved supervisor training providers**

The Board's [supervisor training webpage](#) will list all approved supervisor training provider names, contact details (contact email, phone number and website), types of training they are approved to deliver, and the effective date of the Board approval. Any changes to contact details for the approved training provider must be made in writing to [psychologychair@ahpra.gov.au](mailto:psychologychair@ahpra.gov.au).

### **7. Discontinuing supervisor training**

If a Board-approved supervisor training provider considers they no longer meet the requirements set out in these guidelines, or no longer wants to be a Board-approved provider, they should notify the Board immediately. The provider should also inform any enrolled participants and issue refunds for any training not completed.

The Board will not recognise training delivered while not a Board-approved provider as suitable training for individuals applying for or maintaining BAS status.

### **8. Review**

These guidelines will be reviewed as required, generally every five years.

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<sup>6</sup> The Board appreciates that some circumstances will prevent the provider from notifying certain changes in advance of implementing them (e.g. the departure of a trainer from the organisation). In these circumstances the provider should make reasonable efforts to notify the Board as soon as possible.

## **9. Definitions**

**AHPRA** means the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency established under section 23 of the National Law.

**Area of practice endorsement** is a means provided for by section 98 of the National Law through which additional qualifications and supervised practice recognised by the Board can be identified to the public, employers, and other users of the public online register of practitioners. Practitioners with an area of practice endorsement have the specific area of practice noted on the public register, and can use the title associated with that area of practice.

**Board** refers to the Psychology Board of Australia established under section 31 of the National Law. The Board delegates some decision making powers to committees, state and territory or regional boards, or AHPRA.

**Board-approved supervisor** means a supervisor approved by the Board to provide supervision to provisional psychologists in the 4+2 or 5+1 internship program, registered psychologists in accredited higher degree programs, psychologists doing registrar programs leading to an area of practice endorsement, or registered psychologists doing a transitional or re-entry program.

**Competency-based supervision** means an explicit framework and method of supervision practice, and a consistent evaluative and outcome approach to supervision training.

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

**Provisional psychologist** means a person registered as a provisional psychologist under section 62 of the National Law to enable that individual to complete a mandatory period of supervised practice to become eligible for general registration as a psychologist.

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

**Registered psychologist** in this document includes a psychologist or a provisional psychologist.

**Registrar program** means a Board-approved supervised practice program for the purpose of gaining an area of practice endorsement.

**Supervisee** means a provisional psychologist undertaking a 4+2 or 5+1 internship program; a registered psychologist undertaking an accredited higher degree; a psychologist undertaking a registrar program; a registered psychologist with overseas training undertaking a transitional program; or a registered psychologist undertaking a re-entry program after a period of limited or no psychological practice.

**Supervision** is an interactive process between a supervisee and a supervisor. It provides the supervisee with a professionally stimulating and supportive opportunity for growth. Supervision involves a special type of professional relationship in which supportive direction, facilitative activities, and instructive critique is given by the supervisors to help the supervisee achieve their professional goals.

## **Appendix: Policy for revoking approval of supervisor training providers**

This policy applies to individuals, organisations and consortiums that have been approved by the Board to act as a Board-approved supervisor training provider. It sets out the circumstances when a Board-approved supervisor training provider no longer meets the requirements for approval set out in these guidelines and will have their Board approval revoked.

The Board may revoke the approval of a supervisor training provider when the provider has demonstrated sub-standard performance in one or more of the following areas:

- 1. Guidelines** – a lack of understanding of the Board’s approach to supervisor training and the requirements of these guidelines or the [Guidelines for supervisors](#), including the role of psychology supervision within the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme.
- 2. Course content development and delivery**
  - a. Inadequate course content and development, such as:
    - i. course content does not meet the requirements established in these guidelines, or
    - ii. full training is not facilitating learning in each of the supervisor competencies.
  - b. Inadequate course delivery – for example, the structure, length, frequency and delivery of training does not meet the Board’s requirements.
  - c. Inadequate assessment and evaluation of training participants – for example, participants are not receiving adequate assessment; the assessment is too easy or too difficult to pass.
  - d. Inadequate trainer performance (as demonstrated by participant evaluation).
- 3. Professional registration standards**
  - a. The provider not acted in accordance with the Board’s *Guidelines for advertising of regulated health services*.
  - b. The provider not acted in accordance with the Board-adopted [Code of ethics](#).
  - c. The provider not acted in accordance with professional registration standards.<sup>7</sup>
- 4. Organisational capability**
  - a. The provider cannot meet the necessary organisational capability – for example, the provider cannot demonstrate:
    - i. adequate administrative processes and resourcing
    - ii. secure data management systems and adequate technical capacity
    - iii. adequate systems to support customer service
    - iv. processes and policies concerning confidentiality, privacy, or conflict of interest, or
    - v. that trainers meet the standard for qualifications.
  - b. There is a problem with the status of the business entity (e.g. ABN/ACN no longer valid, entity does not meet tax requirements, entity has engaged in sub-contracting, issues with budget, no longer competitively priced).
- 5. Reporting** – Feedback and evaluation reporting back to the Board does not meet requirements. For example, both regular reporting and annual reporting must be provided in a timely manner and include complete and accurate information.

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<sup>7</sup> A provider may have Board-approval for exemption of a professional registration standard. For example, a provider may have Board-approval to employ a trainer that is not a psychologist and therefore does not meet the *General registration standard*.

## **6. Other**

- a. The provider receives a poor evaluation and review from the Board.
- b. The provider has altered major components of the training without approval from the Board (e.g. changed pricing structure, employed new trainers, or added new courses).
- c. The provider has not met another requirement set by the Board.

### **Revocation process**

The process of revoking approval of a Board-approved supervisor training provider may start when:

- the provider demonstrates sub-standard performance in one or more of the areas listed above
- the Board has reviewed and evaluated the performance of the provider and determined that the performance does not meet the standards required, or
- the Board receives complaints about sub-standard performance of the training provider.

When the Board is considering revoking a training provider's approval, it may first:

- write to the provider about the issue and advise them of their responsibilities
- request to audit feedback and evaluation data
- write to the provider and give them a specified timeframe to rectify the situation
- write to the provider and request a meeting to identify and explore the issues identified
- request a report from the provider about how they intend to remediate unsatisfactory performance, and/or
- work with the provider to develop a remediation plan that requires them to perform certain activities or meet certain conditions. The provider and the Board may agree on a revised reporting schedule to ensure compliance and restore performance to an acceptable level (not to exceed one year).

Revocation will begin when the training provider has not made efforts to sufficiently remedy the performance issues identified by the Board, or when remediation is not possible in the circumstances.

A notice revoking the Board's approval of a supervisor training provider will be sent to the provider's nominated lead and will state: the reasons for the revocation; the effective revocation date; and that any supervisor training provided *after* the revocation date will not be considered Board-approved training and may not count towards the requirement to become or maintain BAS status

After receiving the revocation notice, the training provider must provide clear public statements (for example, on the provider's website) about when their training was considered to be Board-approved and on what date the Board's approval was revoked. The provider must end their interactions with current and active participants in their formerly approved training programs in a professional manner.

The supervisor training provider's details will be removed from the Board's list of approved providers after the revocation date.

The Board's decision to revoke a training provider's approval status is final and not appealable. Supervisor training providers are eligible to re-apply for approval as a supervisor training provider in the next round of applications.