

Thursday, 26 April 2018

Dear Professor Grenyer,

On the following pages is the College of Organisational Psychologists' submission to Consultation Paper 29, regarding proposals for revised guidelines for supervisors and supervisor training providers.

This submission has been prepared by members of the COP National Committee, and has been developed in consultation with the Program Directors of the Organisational Psychology higher degree courses.

Please feel free to contact us any time to discuss any of the specifics of our submission.

Yours sincerely,



Timothy Colin Bednall  
Chair of the College of Organisational Psychologists

We are responding to this request for comment in our capacity as representatives of the profession of organisational psychology. The College supports the introduction of Option 2 (two new guidelines); however, we have feedback concerning the specific proposals.

We have structured this feedback in terms of the three areas identified by the review: (1) guidelines for supervisors and supervisor training providers, (2) the policy on refusing or revoking Board-approved supervisor status, and (3) the policy on the revocation of Board-approved supervisor training provider status.

To provide context for our submission, we believe that high-quality supervision is integral to our profession. We believe that the requirements to attain and maintain supervisor status should be easily accessible, and not cost prohibitive. At present, gaining supervision accreditation is both expensive and time-consuming, and only a minority of organisational psychology graduates choose to undertake it. Moreover, many graduates choose not to undertake area of practice endorsement. These issues mean that it is an ongoing challenge for universities to source a sufficiently large pool of accredited supervisors to support their programs, and for graduates to locate a suitable supervisor for the registrar program.

Thus, our College is broadly in favour of initiatives that increase the accessibility of supervision accreditation while maintaining standards. In particular, we support greater flexibility for universities to choose appropriate field supervisors based on their assessment of their students' learning needs.

### **1. Guidelines for supervisors and supervisor training providers**

The College supports the combining of the supervisor categories in line with the proposal. We agree with the arguments that implementing these changes will reduce administrative load and create greater flexibility. We believe that the requirement to hold general registration for three years is reasonable across the different categories of supervision. We also agree that with the new Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC) accreditation standards, it is appropriate to remove the area of practice endorsement requirement from the supervision accreditation requirements.

With regard to these changes, we believe there needs to be greater clarification from the Psychology Board and APAC regarding the new requirements for university programs. In particular, it was unclear whether area of practice endorsement would be a requirement for all field placement supervisors associated with a Masters program. Our

consultation with Program Directors suggested that there were multiple interpretations of what the new guidelines would mean for their program.

We believe the introduction of videoconferencing technology is an excellent initiative, and we believe it will make it easier for psychologists located in remote and regional areas to retain their accreditation. We also recommend that the Psychology Board explore the viability of using this technology for the Skills Training Workshop (Part 2).

One thing that is unclear is whether the Master Class training must be delivered in a single day, or whether it can span multiple days. For some members, it may be easier to attend two half-day workshops, or multiple evening workshops.

We regard the length and cost of the three-part training for new supervisors to be a significant barrier to participation. We would urge the Psychology Board to consider whether it could be shortened, or alternatively, whether the components of the training can be spread out over multiple CPD cycles. If the training cannot be reduced, one suggestion is to package the three-part training as a structured program that would cover a practitioner's CPD requirements for an entire year.

We note that one of the proposals is to remove the first supervisor competency, relating to knowledge of the discipline. If this is not listed as a specific competency, it should at least be listed as an ongoing expectation for supervisors.

We support the separation of the guidelines into two different documents.

We also agree that overseas qualified people with equivalent qualifications should be permitted to apply to become a Board-approved supervisor.

## **2. Policy on refusing or revoking Board-approved supervisor status**

The College does not have any specific objections to the proposed changes.

It is unclear from the guidelines whether a supervisor whose accreditation has expired (i.e., exceeded the 5-year period) or revoked can have their accreditation renewed by attending a Master Class. Greater clarification on this issue would be appreciated.

## **3. Policy on the revocation of Board-approved supervisor training provider status**

The College does not have any specific objections to the proposed changes.