Public consultation

Revised guidelines for supervisors and supervisor training providers

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 Board is welcoming feedback on the proposal until close of business (AEST), **Friday 27 April 2018.**

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Please indicate if you would like your organisation to:

☐ Remain anonymous

☒ Be published alongside your submission in the supporting documents for the final code of practice

ABOUT SIOPA

Founded in November 2016, the Society for Industrial and Organisational Psychology Australia (SIOPA) is an independent and incorporated association with a purpose to create growth, supervision and professional development opportunities for Organisational Psychologists and related disciplines in Australia. Our practices, methods and principles have been derived and supported by US based SIOP and are tailored to suit the renewed challenges that face our profession moving into the future in Australia.

Among their many areas of practice, Organisational Psychologists may work in workplace rehabilitation, occupational health and safety and wellbeing, stress and work-life balance. Organisational Psychologists' expertise and knowledge of individual, group and organisational factors allow them to more accurately identify the root cause of an issue, and thus develop an effective intervention.

Organisational Psychology is one of the recognised areas of practice endorsements which requires advanced training followed by a period of supervised practice. Therefore, it is appropriate for SIOPA to submit a response regarding the review of supervisor guidelines.

FOCUS AND FORMAT OF SUBMISSION

SIOPA appreciates the opportunity to comment on the review of supervisor guidelines.

SIOPA's submission to this review will be framed from the perspectives of Organisational Psychologists. This submission will first offer an answer to Question 1 of the general questions about the review and second, address some of the key points raised. We will refer to the page number for the specific section we intend to address.

SUBMISSION

General Questions for Consideration

Which option do you prefer – the status quo or the (two) new guidelines?

SIOPA prefers Option Two to separate the guidelines into two, one for supervisors and one for supervisor training providers, including the incorporation of the revocation policies into their associated guideline.

General Comments and Suggestions

Page 4. Point 7

SIOPA notes the Board have made an evaluation of the success of the Guidelines for supervisors and supervisor training providers, implemented in 2013. The Board stated it "…believes that for the most part

the requirements for supervisors and supervisor training providers are appropriate and working well." SIOPA request that information and evidence is provided as to how the conclusion was made by the Board.

PAGE 9. POINT 28

SIOPA supports the proposed combining of the existing BAS categories into one category (all except registrar program principal supervisors) requiring three years' general registration. SIOPA recognises that this will result in reduced administrative cost and complexity.

SIOPA further supports the combining of the existing BAS categories as it displays sensitivity to the nature, status and current demands of the Organisational Psychology profession and the delivery of the higher degree programs. That is, the current supervision requirements (i.e. area of practice endorsement) for the higher degree placement component of the Masters and Doctorate programs in Organisational Psychology place a great strain on the viability of the existing academic programs. There is currently little incentive for Psychologists to become endorsed within the organisational field. With approximately 12 placement supervisors in Western Australia that meet the current criteria and over 20 students at any one time undergoing a Masters or Doctorate program in Organisational Psychology, coupled with an increasing demand for registrar program supervision, this significantly restricts the profession in a number of ways (e.g. makes it difficult for students to complete the program in a timely manner, limits student placement variety and thus diversity of work experience, and prevents inter-professional education, collaboration and supervision). Requiring three years' general registration as the criteria will allow for greater placement variety and significantly reduce demands on current placement supervisors and the Organisational Psychology profession as a whole.

Additionally, SIOPA supports the notion that BAS is required for supervision of Provisional Psychologists, and endorsed supervision is required for the endorsement of a registered psychologist. The supervisor having experience in the level that the supervisee is seeking to attain is consistent with other professions and education systems.

PAGE 9. POINT 32

SIOPA acknowledges the Board has determined it is now appropriate to remove the endorsement requirements from its supervision guidelines in higher degree programs, allowing this matter to be addressed through the accreditation mechanism. However, SIOPA argues that the accreditation mechanism should be primarily responsible for the enforcing of standards. The reference to APAC standards, who then defer back to supervisors of practicums needing board approval (Criterion 1.8 in the Jan 2019 APAC Accreditation Evidence Guide) is confusing and detracts from the purpose of the supervisor approval guidelines. As it is not relevant to registration as a board approved supervisor, SIOPA requests the Board remove the reference to APAC accreditation.

As mentioned previously, SIOPA identifies requiring three years' general registration for higher degree placement supervisors will be beneficial to the continuing viability of the Masters and Professional Doctorate programs in Organisational Psychology.

PAGE 10. POINT 38

SIOPA notes the Board have made an evaluation of the success of supervisor training arrangements. It is stated that, "The Board considers the current supervisor training arrangements are working well and should continue." SIOPA requests information and evidence is provided as to how the conclusion was made by the Board. SIOPA has received feedback from its members that the current supervisor training is not running as well as it could be. For example, the cost of the training (direct and indirect) does not produce a recognisable value and return on investment to the participant for the following reasons: most supervisor training has a high clinical focus, a significant amount of the content of the first module is redundant as it focuses on an extensive discussion about the history of various competency models and frameworks rather than focussing on the critical elements for supervision. We recognise that the Board allows some variability in training content, however we argue that initial supervisor training should focus on supervisor competencies which are generic enough to be applicable to all areas of practice endorsement. This is particularly relevant to the initial supervisor training in Western Australia where opportunities are scarce, and those limited opportunities should contain suitable training for all Psychologists. We recommend that the Board include consideration for generic supervisor training suitable for all areas of practice endorsement within the requirements of the full training course.

PAGE 11. POINT 42

SIOPA understands the rationale for the Board proposing to remove all references to CPD from the guidelines, enabling supervisors to determine if any full training or master classes they complete are relevant to an appropriate goal set out in their annual learning plan. However, SIOPA has identified a potential long-term risk should training not be identified as potentially relevant as CPD within the guidelines. As the current Board move on, the original intent of removing the guideline may change and individuals may not have their supervision training counted towards their CPD hours, even if they are able to justify it as contributing to their learning plan. This may discourage individuals from undergoing supervisor training. SIOPA recommends the guidelines stipulate full training and master classes are considered appropriate for CPD and to also allow it to contribute towards CPD for an area of practice endorsement as well as general registration, particularly as some of the masterclasses do contextualise their content within areas of practice endorsement.

PAGE 12. POINT 54-56

SIOPA questions the appropriateness of the Board stipulating training participants prepare a written reflection (including a self-evaluation) in Part 3. SIOPA encourages the Board to detail minimum competency standards, guidelines that are relevant to all participants, and to not be overly prescriptive with regards to method of assessment. This will allow for innovation, flexibility and aspiration towards best practice standards in education and training.

PAGE 13. POINT 58

SIOPA supports the Board's proposal to extend the deadline for completing Part 3 of the full supervisor training from three to six months following completion of Part 2 (skills training). This is particularly important

for Western Australia and other remote areas where there are few training providers and there is a likelihood that the individual may be required to travel to the Eastern States to complete the different components.

GUIDELINES FOR SUPERVISORS

Page 4.

Described under the competency, "Ability to assess the psychological competencies of the supervisee", the description includes the statement, "Encouraging supervisee self-reflectivity and promoting meta-competence". SIOPA questions how one might meaningfully assess and measure the supervisor's encouragement of reflection and meta-competence in a supervisee. SIOPA encourages the Board to provide supporting information or examples here.

Page 4.

To make language clearer, SIOPA recommends that the description, "Addressing problems related to competencies, including skills in addressing problems related to the supervisee not meeting minimal core competencies." is reworded to, "Addressing problems related to the supervisee not meeting minimal core competencies.

Page 7.

SIOPA recommends that the following recommendation be deleted from the proposed guidelines:

1. As stated on Page 11, Point 42, "The Board proposes to remove all references to CPD from the guidelines…" hence should the board wish to be consistent, this recommendation should be removed.
2. "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."

GUIDELINES FOR SUPERVISOR TRAINING PROVIDERS

Page 3.

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END OF SUBMISSION