

# National psychology exam candidate manual

July 2019

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## 1. Overview of the exam

The national psychology exam (the exam) has been developed by the Psychology Board of Australia (the Board) in accordance with section 52 (1) (b) of the [Health Practitioner Regulation National Law](#) (the National Law).

The exam supports the Board's [General registration standard](#).<sup>1</sup> To be eligible to apply for general registration, applicants must complete a six-year sequence of education and training, and provide evidence of having passed the national psychology exam (unless exempt).<sup>2</sup>

The exam has been in place since 1 July 2010 with overseas applicants for general registration required to provide evidence of passing the exam from 1 July 2013, and all other applicants (unless exempt) from 1 July 2014.<sup>3</sup>

The Board has developed the National psychology exam candidate manual (the manual) to provide guidance to candidates preparing for the exam.<sup>4</sup> It should be read carefully and in conjunction with the [Guidelines for the national psychology exam](#).

## 2. Content of the exam

### Curriculum

Candidates are required to be familiar with the exam curriculum, which is published on the [Board's website](#).<sup>5</sup> The exam questions are derived solely from the exam curriculum.

The exam is designed to test the core competencies for general registration as a psychologist in Australia.<sup>6</sup> It is designed to test the application of knowledge to psychological practice and is therefore based on actual case studies and professional issues likely to be faced by psychologists working with the public across a broad range of contexts.

The exam assesses eight core competencies through four exam curriculum domains:

- ethics (including applied ethical and professional reasoning)
- assessment (including methods and approaches)
- intervention (including intervention selection and implementation), and
- communication (including communication and reporting skills).

### Additional resources to support the curriculum

The Board has published several resources that sit alongside the curriculum and are designed to support candidates to study for the exam. These resources are published on the Board's website<sup>7</sup> and include the following:

- *A brief orientation to the national psychology exam*. This document provides more detail about the eight competencies the exam will assess. It provides detailed questions and examples to guide candidates in preparing for each of the four curriculum domains covered by the exam.
- *Recommended reading list*. The reading list is recommended but not mandatory. The applied psychology field has extensive literature covering the curriculum domains, with many more resources

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<sup>1</sup> The General registration standard is published on the website at [www.psychologyboard.gov.au](http://www.psychologyboard.gov.au). Registration standards are approved by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council pursuant to the National Law.

<sup>2</sup> Applicants for general registration who are exempt from passing the exam are outlined in the [Guidelines for the national psychology exam](#).

<sup>3</sup> The Board approved several transition provisions for implementing the exam allowing a stepped roll out.

<sup>4</sup> See section 39 of the National Law.

<sup>5</sup> See the '[National Psychology Exam](#)' page of the Board's website.

<sup>6</sup> For more information please review the [general registration standard](#).

<sup>7</sup> See the '[National Psychology Exam](#)' page of the Board's website.

that complement those in this list. The recommended reading list is updated from time to time as new editions, other journal articles, and improved texts become available. All exam questions can be mapped to a reference on this list.

- *Sample exam questions.* This document provides examples of the type of questions and answers that will be on the national psychology exam. It also includes an explanation of the preferred answer to assist candidates in their exam study.

### **Practice exam**

Once a candidate has registered to sit the national psychology exam, they can sit a practice exam to further assist in their preparation.

The practice exam consists of a set of exam questions. It is designed to provide candidates with the 'look and feel' of the exam including how the exam is structured, the types and style of questions and how exam time will need to be managed.

To sit the practice exam, candidates first need to create an account on the [exam portal](#) and register for the exam. Once registered, candidates can sit the practice exam at any time before their scheduled exam date.

Candidates who successfully complete the practice exam will not be allowed to re-sit it. Candidates who fail the practice exam are eligible to re-sit the practice exam after a day.

## **3. Structure of the exam**

### **Exam questions**

The exam questions are multiple-choice questions. Exam questions will be mostly in the format of:

- a vignette or scenario
- a lead-in question, and
- a set of five options, of which one is the correct answer and four are distracters.

The exam is designed to test the application of psychological knowledge to safe practice. Although the questions can rely on a factual knowledge base, the exam focuses on the application of that knowledge to actual psychological cases and professional issues. Multiple choice questions are deemed suitable to test applied knowledge, and to allow candidates to demonstrate psychological reasoning and core competencies in a fair, equitable and transparent manner.

The exam questions have been developed by senior practitioners and the best answer is their consensus view. Questions are developed to test the core competencies of the [exam curriculum](#), as described in the professional and scientific literature and the recommended reading.

The correct answer is the best or most correct option in the view of the Board.

Exam questions are changed regularly so candidates who repeat the exam will get a different set of questions.

The Board reviews all exam questions for relevance of content, effectiveness and reliability. This Board periodically undertakes quality assurance processes that provide the basis for further question development and improvement.

### **Number of questions**

There are 150 questions in the exam. All questions are of equal value and there is no deduction of marks for incorrect answers. Candidates are encouraged to attempt all questions.

### **Proportion of questions testing each domain of the curriculum**

As three of the four domains assessed by the exam incorporate a larger amount of content, the exam includes a greater number of questions on these three domains than the fourth (communication) domain. In addition, the communication domain significantly overlaps in content with the first three domains. See Table 1 for details on the number of questions on the exam for each domain.

Table 1: Number of questions testing the domains of the exam

Exam Domain	Number of questions	Percentage
Ethics	45	30
Assessment	45	30
Intervention	45	30
Communication	15	10
Total questions	150	100

### Duration

The duration of the exam is 3.5 hours (210 minutes). Candidates are required to allocate a total of four hours to complete registration procedures before the exam, and post-exam administration activities.

### Pass grade

The exam is a pass or fail exam. The Board has applied a scaled passing score of 70 per cent.

The scaled passing score is the Board's view of the minimum level of applied knowledge required for independent and safe psychology practice.

As there are five options per question (a, b, c, d, or e), a candidate responding randomly is likely to achieve a score of 20 per cent based on chance alone. Therefore, a passing score of 50 per cent has been adjusted to 70 per cent (50+20). 70 per cent is the standard passing score for many exams of this type.

Raw scores (the total number of answers that were correct) will be arithmetically converted to a scale that ranges from 0 to 100 that takes into consideration differences in difficulty among different versions of the exam.

Adjusting scores will ensure that the passing score will remain the same, even if different versions of the exam vary in difficulty. This ensures that candidates will not be penalised if one exam is harder, or given an unfair advantage if an exam is easier.

The exam and pass rates are moderated by the Board.

The pass rate applies to the total score on the exam. Candidates are not required to pass all four curriculum components in addition to achieving a passing score on the overall exam. This is because there is considerable overlap between the four domains assessed by the exam. For example, there are ethical considerations when conducting psychological assessments; and communication competencies required when delivering psychological interventions.

## 4. Preparing for the exam

The responsibility to prepare for and pass the exam rests with the candidate. Candidates are expected to develop a broad strategy for preparing for the exam.

This preparation should include:

- developing a comprehensive study plan that is targeted and includes timed milestones
- using professional networks, workplaces, libraries and colleagues to source study materials
- setting adequate time aside for private reading and study
- seeking advice and assistance from supervisors
- seeking advice and support from colleagues
- attending workshops, training institutes or continuing professional development (CPD) events, and
- seeking appropriate structured and unstructured learning opportunities that focus on developing the core competencies assessed by the exam.

Candidates preparing for the exam should:

- read the [Guidelines for the national psychology exam](#) to learn about the purpose of the exam, eligibility to sit the exam, exemptions and policies relevant to the exam
- carefully read the [National psychology exam candidate manual](#) (this document) to fully understand how to prepare for the exam and what to expect on the exam day
- become familiar with the eight core competencies assessed by the exam, and the four exam domains by studying the [national psychology exam curriculum](#)
- become familiar with the [additional resources](#) developed by the Board to sit alongside the curriculum. The additional resources include: *A brief orientation to the national psychology exam* and the *Recommended reading list*
- complete the sample exam questions available on the Board's website and study the explanation of the preferred answer, and
- after registering to sit the exam, complete the practice exam to see how the exam is structured, the types and style of questions and how exam time will need to be managed.

All resources are published on the [Board's website](#)<sup>8</sup>.

Candidates preparing for the exam should use their judgment about how to prepare and consult their supervisor in designing a plan of study based on the curriculum, and the associated resources developed by the Board. Exam candidates should check the website regularly for updates to the exam resources.

Candidates with little or no recent study or practice are likely to have difficulty with the exam.

## 5. Before the exam

### Special accommodation

Candidates with a documented health condition, mental health condition or disability can request support to provide appropriate assistance to allow them to sit the exam.

#### Applications for special accommodation

Special accommodation requests need to be made in writing to the [National Psychology Exam Coordinator](#) a **minimum of thirty days in advance** of the intended exam date. Relevant documentary evidence (e.g. medical certificate) must be attached to the application.

#### Possible outcome of an application for special accommodation

Candidates with special accommodation needs will be provided with facilities to support the following:

- **Mobility condition:** all exam centres have wide passages, wheelchair access, accessible toilets and adjustable desks.
- **Visual impairment:** the exam can be delivered with larger fonts and higher contrasting colour, and reader assistance.
- **Hearing impairment:** site support can be provided to ensure that exam supervisors can communicate instructions in a satisfactory manner.
- **Other mental or physical health conditions:** other conditions supported by appropriate documentation are addressed case-by-case.

The request will be determined by the National Psychology Exam Coordinator.

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<sup>8</sup> See the '[National Psychology Exam](#)' page of the Board's website.

## Special consideration

Special consideration is available to candidates who are unable to sit or complete an exam due to exceptional circumstance beyond their control. Candidates may be given an opportunity to re-sit the exam at the next available date without incurring additional exam fees.

Candidates who can demonstrate that they have adverse circumstances beyond their control are eligible for special consideration. These reasons include:

- acute illness (such as hospital admission, onset of serious illness)
- loss or bereavement (such as death of a close family member)
- hardship or trauma (such as being victim of crime, severe disruption to domestic life)
- unforeseen call-up for service (such as military service, court appearance, jury service, emergency service)
- work commitments and circumstances beyond their control (a letter on company/organisation letterhead from an employer confirming this must be attached to the application form)
- religious convictions (a letter from a religious leader must accompany the application)
- computer malfunction at the exam centre, or
- natural disaster, bomb threat or similar such event necessitating the evacuation of the exam centre.

### Applications for special consideration

Applications for special consideration:

- will only be accepted from eligible candidates
- will not be approved unless there are exceptional circumstances beyond the control of the candidate, and
- must be supported by convincing evidence of the exceptional circumstances.

Failure to follow this process may result in the application being delayed or not accepted.

Applications for special consideration must be submitted in writing to the [National Psychology Exam Coordinator](#) before the exam or within 14 working days after the date of the exam (depending on the nature of the request). Relevant documentary evidence of the exceptional circumstances beyond the control of the candidate must be attached to the application and must include one or more of the following:

- medical certificate
- death certificate
- police report
- statutory declaration
- exam centre report, or
- evidence of requirement to attend court, jury service, military service, emergency service.

Candidates who complete the exam are usually not eligible for special consideration unless there are special circumstances.

No special consideration request will be considered based on the content of the exam. The special consideration procedure is not a means of circumventing the Board's usual exam process.

The only special consideration mechanism available for candidates who fail the exam will be based on process (e.g. failing the exam because the test centre was evacuated during the exam). Special consideration will not lower the pass mark, nor will it improve a candidate's overall score.

### Possible outcome of an application for special consideration

Written requests for special consideration will be reviewed and considered by the National Psychology Exam Coordinator and assessed against the special consideration criteria outlined above. The review will take place within 21 days of receiving the request.

If the National Psychology Exam Coordinator grants the request for special consideration, they will decide how special consideration will take effect and let the candidate know in writing. Any special arrangement for consideration will be acted upon promptly. The National Psychology Exam Coordinator decision is final.

When a request is granted, the usual outcome would be to allow the candidate to re-sit the exam as soon as possible at no additional cost to the candidate. If approved, special consideration may consist of:

- deferral of the exam until the next available date (no additional fee or reduced fee), or
- other special arrangements for undertaking the exam (no additional fee or reduced fee).

## 6. Booking your exam

### Eligibility

Candidates must ensure they are eligible to sit the exam before booking an exam time. Information on eligibility and exemptions from sitting the exam is outlined in the [Guidelines for the national psychology exam](#).

### Registering to sit the exam

To register for the exam candidates will need to do the following:

1. Create an account on the [exam portal](#). The exam portal uses 128-bit encryption to protect data and meets international security standards to protect candidate's information.<sup>9</sup> The account will be activated within five days. An email confirmation will be sent to the candidate when an account has been activated.
2. Once an account has been activated, candidates can register to sit the exam through the exam portal. The candidate account will grant access to the practice exam and enable booking and payment. The candidate will receive a confirmation email with the details of the exam date, testing centre and requirements for the exam day.

Candidates are responsible for scheduling the exam and presenting at the right time and exam centre.

Candidates may only lodge one application to sit the exam per quarter period (every three months) in any of the states or territories.

### Venues

The Board has contracted with a test administrator called Kryterion Testing Solutions to administer the national psychology exam.

Kryterion has many testing centres across Australia. Candidates can choose their preferred testing centre to sit the exam when paying for and booking the exam date. It is not mandatory to sit the exam in the state that you completed your training.

If a chosen venue is not available on the scheduled exam date, it means all of the available times have been booked for that day. Some of the larger centres like Sydney and Melbourne have multiple testing centres so another venue might have availability. Otherwise, a different exam date will need to be selected.

In some cases, availability beyond the scheduled exam date will be offered to candidates where venue availability has been exhausted. Additional testing dates are added progressively. Any difficulties with availability for a preferred venue can be directed to the [National Psychology Exam Coordinator](#).

### Exam timetable

The timetable of exam dates for each calendar year is published on the [Board's website](#) along with the closing dates for applications to register for the exam.<sup>10</sup> Exams will usually be scheduled at least twice a year and up to four times a year.

Exams will be made available in the capital city of each state and territory of Australia.

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<sup>9</sup> The exam portal is at - <https://www.webassessor.com/ahpra/index.html>.

<sup>10</sup> See the '[National Psychology Exam](#)' page of the Board's website.

Candidates who are unable to register for a published exam sitting will need to contact the [National Psychology Exam Coordinator](#) to discuss requirements.

### **Changing the scheduled exam date**

Candidates can change the date and time of their scheduled exam for any reason up to 72 hours before the scheduled exam date without incurring additional fees. Exams can be rescheduled using the [exam portal](#).

Candidates are only permitted to change the date and time within 72 hours of the exam if special circumstances apply – see the section on *Special consideration* in Section 5 of this manual. Candidates who need to reschedule an exam within 72 hours of the booked exam date must contact the National Psychology Exam Coordinator immediately for assistance at [nationalpsychologyexam@ahpra.gov.au](mailto:nationalpsychologyexam@ahpra.gov.au).

## **7. Paying for the exam**

### **Exam fee**

The fee for sitting the exam is published on the Board's website in the [Schedule of fees](#).

### **Paying for the exam**

AHPRA only accepts credit card payment (including Visa or Mastercard debit cards) for the exam. Payment must be made through the [exam portal](#).

For candidates who do not have a credit card, AHPRA will accept payment from someone else (a manager, relative, etc) on your behalf.

### **Additional charges**

Some banks may apply an international transaction fee to MasterCard or Visa purchases where the transaction is made in Australian dollars but the party accepting the card is overseas. Kryterion Testing Solutions head office is based in Arizona, USA.

Candidates are advised to check with their bank regarding their fees.

### **Payment confirmation**

Payment confirmations are sent automatically to the email address listed on the [exam candidate account](#).

If a confirmation email has not been received within five days into an inbox (or spam or junk folder), contact the [National Psychology Exam Coordinator](#) for assistance.

### **Refunds**

Candidates that cancel an exam booking 72 hours before the scheduled exam date will have the exam fee refunded to the credit card originally used for payment. It may take up to ten days before the credit is shown in the account.

Candidates that cancel an exam booking within 72 hours of the scheduled exam date are not refunded the exam fee, unless special consideration has been approved (see Section 5 of this manual for more information).

## **8. Sitting the exam**

The following section provides important information for candidates when sitting the exam. It should be read carefully and followed closely.

### **What to bring to the test centre**

Candidates will need to present the exam supervisor (sometimes also called exam invigilator, proctor or exam adjudicator) with the following documents:

- the printed email confirmation containing the candidate's exam authorisation code, and
- two (2) types of formal identification (one must be a photo ID). Examples of photo identification include a passport, driver's license, or current Student photo ID card. Non-photo ID can include a Medicare card, birth certificate, Australian government concession or health care card.

Failure to bring sufficient identification and the exam authorisation code may result in the candidate being excluded from sitting the exam.

Where an exam supervisor has a reasonable concern about a candidate's ability to properly establish their identity or there is a concern that identity documents are being misused, the candidate will be refused access to the exam. Fraudulent use of identity documents is a serious matter and may be referred to police. Candidates who are refused access to the exam will forfeit the fees paid to sit the exam.

### Arriving at the test centre

Candidates should arrive at the test centre at least 15-20 minutes before the scheduled exam time to undertake the check-in and security processes.

Candidates who arrive late should talk to the test centre staff who will do all they can to ensure you can sit your exam.

Candidates who are not able to sit the exam should contact the [National Psychology Exam Coordinator](#) as soon as possible for assistance.

### Check-in and security processes

There are a variety of security processes in place at all testing venues.

In addition to **verifying registration to sit the exam**, and providing **formal identification**, candidates will be required to:

- **turn out exterior pockets** (on jackets, jeans etc.) to verify they are either empty or do not contain any prohibited items
- **hand over external eyewear** to the exam supervisor for (brief) inspection to verify that the eyewear is not technology-enabled, and
- **review and agree to a set of terms and conditions for the exam to keep the exam and questions confidential.** By accepting this agreement candidates will confirm eligibility to undertake the exam and acceptance of the exam rules. Candidates will be asked to sign a statement similar to the following:  
This exam is confidential and proprietary. It is made available to you, the examinee, solely for the purpose of assessing your proficiency level in the skill areas referenced in the title of this exam. To protect the integrity of the exams, the examinee must adhere to strict guidelines. The examinee shall not disclose to any third party the contents of this exam, including but not limited to questions, form of questions, or answers, in whole or in part, in any form or by any means, verbal or written, electronic or mechanical, for any purpose. I have read and agree to the terms of the above statement.

### Items permitted/not permitted in the testing room

Candidates will not be permitted to take any of the following items into the exam:

- any reference material (electronic or hard copy)
- mobile phones
- any devices that connect to the internet (e.g. smart watches)
- other equipment (including pens and paper)
- water or other beverages (to safeguard the computer equipment). Please note that candidates will not be allowed extra time in the exam to have water breaks
- any personal items (these will be stored securely by the exam supervisor).

Exceptions can be made for candidates to take personal items needed for medical conditions into the exam room. A request for special accommodation will need to be submitted to the [National Psychology Exam Coordinator](#) at least 30 days in advance of the exam date, and be formally approved to do this (see Section 5 of this manual for more information).

## **What to expect from the testing environment**

The exam is a high-stakes exam delivered in a regulatory context. It is a formal exam within a highly controlled test environment that includes clear rules, rigorous security protocols and supervision. Exam supervisors are trained and certified to deliver high-stakes exams and follow standard operating procedures. The test environment will be different to what many candidates will have experienced in sitting exams at school or university in less formal or less controlled settings.

Candidates may undertake an exam in a room with test-takers who are sitting other exams, or who are from other professions. These candidates may have different requirements, rules or restrictions than those that apply to candidates sitting the national psychology exam. Familiarising yourself with the rules that apply to the national psychology exam (in this manual) before the exam day is highly recommended.

Because test centres work with many providers using staggered exam start times, it is normal for other test-takers to enter or leave the testing room while exams are in progress. To minimise disruption, candidates will have access to noise-cancelling headphones or disposable earplugs.

Candidates who have issues with the exam environment should speak with the exam supervisor on the day to allow the best opportunity for prompt resolution of the problem. It is important that candidates are provided with a professional and secure environment to complete the exam. Exam supervisors are required to note any problems arising during the conduct of an exam and report these to Kryterion. Such reports are used to verify and support any applications for special consideration or reviews based on exam process or unfairness in the conduct of the exam.

## **Expectation of professional conduct**

All formal exams have rules relating to conduct. However, there are some rules that, if breached, would have a significant impact on the candidate's future capacity to sit an exam or to be or remain registered.

Candidates sitting the exam are subject to the usual rules of ethical and professional conduct.

Failure to comply with any rule or instruction by an exam supervisor will be regarded as a breach of discipline and may lead to exclusion from the exam and the candidate deemed to have failed. More serious breaches of exam rules or security may result in disciplinary or criminal action.

The Board regards misconduct during an exam as a serious matter. Falsifying results, fraudulent or dishonest conduct in connection with an exam has the potential for practitioners who are not qualified or not otherwise competent and safe to practise to be improperly registered. In such cases the Board will consider any complaint and may refer the matter to a responsible tribunal. If a tribunal finds a complaint sustained it may make a range of orders, including cancellation of registration and disqualifying a person from applying for registration for a specified period.

## **9. After the exam**

### **If you miss the exam date**

Candidates that could not sit or complete the exam due to exceptional circumstance beyond their control can apply for special consideration. See Section 5 of this manual for more information.

### **Receiving results**

Candidates will receive their exam results by email within four weeks of the close of the exam period. Results will state whether the candidate passed or failed. No further detail about results will be provided, as the exam is a regulatory exam, not an exam given in an educational context. Results will not be given by telephone.

After the exam has finished, any communication about the exam must be addressed to AHPRA through the [National Psychology Exam Coordinator](#). Candidates must not communicate with members of the Psychology Board of Australia or the Board's committees about the exam.

### **Exam failure**

Registrants who fail the exam are permitted to re-sit the exam after completing a further three-month period of supervised practice as a psychologist or provisional psychologist.

If a registrant fails **three times**, they will not be able to sit another exam until their registration renewal or a new application for registration is approved by the Board. Details on the procedures to follow if a registrant fails the exam three times, including available options, steps to take, and evidence required by the Board, can be found in the:

- [Guidelines for the national psychology exam](#)
- [Policy and procedure for candidates who fail the exam three times](#) (attached in the Guidelines for the national psychology exam), and
- [Statement and plan for professional development](#) (the [SPPD-76 form](#)).

Candidates who fail the exam are strongly encouraged to review their study plan and consider making changes and improvements to the way they are preparing for the exam. See Section 4 of this manual for more information on strategies to prepare for sitting the exam.

## Review

There is no review process based on the content of the exam. Exam results (e.g. a fail result) are not subject to review.

Candidates can apply for special consideration if they are unable to sit or complete the exam due to exceptional circumstances beyond their control. See Section 5 of this manual for more information on special consideration.

A candidate can request a review if the candidate believes:

- that their exam performance was impaired as a result of a deficiency or error in the exam process, or
- that there was unfairness in the conduct of the exam, or
- there was an administrative breach during the exam.

Any request for review must be made in writing to the [National Psychology Exam Coordinator](#) within eight weeks of sitting the exam, and must include the following:

- the grounds and reasons for seeking review, and
- any relevant supporting documentation or other material.

### Possible outcome of a review

The written request for review will be considered by the Board as well as assessed against the review criteria (as outlined above). The review will take place within 21 days of receiving the request.

The Board will let the candidate know the decision and the reasons for the decision in writing as soon as practicable after the review. The Board's decision is final.

The usual outcome for a successful review would be to allow the candidate to re-sit the exam as soon as possible at no additional cost to the candidate. A successful review outcome may consist of:

- re-sitting the exam at the next available date (no additional fee or reduced fee), or
- other special arrangements for undertaking the exam (no additional fee or reduced fee), or
- not counting the exam results (if failed) in the number of failed exams (see the exam failure policy).

The Board recognises the rights of candidates to have their personal information protected. Candidates can be assured that [AHPRA's Privacy Policy](#) will be complied with when managing reviews.

## 10. Further Information

### Further information for candidates

The Board has developed the [Guidelines for the national psychology exam](#) to provide guidance to candidates preparing for the exam, including information on the:

- purpose of the exam
- the groups required to sit the exam
- exemptions from sitting the exam
- competency standards

- eligibility to sit the exam, and
- policies relevant to the exam.

Candidates are strongly recommended to review this document carefully. More information is available about the exam on the Psychology Board of Australia website: [www.psychologyboard.gov.au](http://www.psychologyboard.gov.au).

## Contact

All correspondence about the national psychology exam should be directed to the National Exams Coordinator at [nationalpsychologyexam@ahpra.gov.au](mailto:nationalpsychologyexam@ahpra.gov.au).

## 11. Review

This manual will be reviewed as required, generally every five years.

## 12. Definitions

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

**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.

**Candidate** means any person approved by the Board as eligible to sit the national psychology exam.

**Competence** refers to a combination of practical and theoretical knowledge, cognitive skills, behaviour, and values used to perform a specific behaviour or set of behaviours to a standard, in professional practice settings associated with a professional role<sup>11</sup>.

**Core (competence)** is a competence, the possession of which is critical to the overall ability of a person to practise to an acceptable professional standard. Core competences are expected to be possessed by all those who claim competence in professional practice. It should be noted that additional competences may also be required, depending upon areas of specialism and socio-cultural settings, to ensure overall competence as a practitioner<sup>12</sup>.

**Exam** means the national psychology exam.

**Exam supervisor** means the staff person who oversees the delivery of the exam at a test centre. Sometimes also called exam invigilator, proctor or exam adjudicator.

**National Law** refers to the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law.

**National Psychology Exam Coordinator** refers to AHPRA staff responsible for the operational day-to-day running of the exam, as agreed between the Board and AHPRA in Schedule 1 of the Health Professions Agreement.

**Practice** means any role, whether remunerated or not, in which the individual uses their skills and knowledge as a registered psychologist in the profession. Practice in this context is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical care. It also includes using professional knowledge in a direct non-clinical relationship with clients, working in management, administration, education, research, advisory, regulatory or policy development roles, and any other roles that impact on the safe, effective delivery of services in the profession.

**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.

<sup>11</sup> Definition taken from the [International declaration of core competencies in professional psychology](#), p.4

<sup>12</sup> Definition taken from the [International declaration of core competencies in professional psychology](#), p.5

**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.

**Scaled passing score** means passing the national psychology exam at a score of 70 per cent or higher. Raw scores (the total number of answers that were correct) are arithmetically converted to a scale that ranges from 0 to 100 and takes into consideration differences in difficulty among different versions of the exam. Adjusting scores will ensure that the passing score will remain the same, even if different versions of the exam vary in difficulty. This ensures that candidates will not be penalised if an exam is harder or given an unfair advantage if an exam is easier.

**Supervisor** or **board approved supervisor** means a person who holds general registration as a psychologist and who has been approved by the Board to supervise provisional psychologists or psychologists.