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The Psychology Board of Australia
psychconsultation@ahpra.gov.au

To whom it may concern,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on The Psychology Board of Australia's Consultation Paper 29 on **Guidelines for supervisors and supervisor training providers**. As academics in the Master of Educational Psychology program at the Melbourne Graduate School Education we are greatly impacted by the supervisor requirements and welcome this current review of the guidelines. We have chosen to provide feedback on the following questions;

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

We strongly support Option 2- the two new guidelines.

2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of moving from the current guidelines and revocation policies to the draft guidelines?

There are clear advantages in moving to the new guidelines for higher degree providers. Under the current guidelines our capacity to engage the required number of board approved supervisors (BAS) with area of practice endorsement (AoP) is significantly impeded.

Approximately 30% of our field supervisors hold endorsement within the required area of practice, however not all supervise consistently. Meeting this shortfall of supervisors beyond the current exemption date of December 31, 2018 for our higher degree program is unachievable. To compensate, student intake would need to reduce to ensure sufficient placement opportunities with endorsed supervisors. This would have considerable negative impacts on the public need and demand for suitably qualified professionals with specialised skills in educational and developmental psychology. More professionals are required to respond to the increasing levels of risk in young people and associated psycho-social difficulties, not less.

The University of Melbourne is currently one of four universities nationally offering postgraduate qualifications in Educational and Developmental Psychology. If unchanged, the current guidelines will impact the sustainability of our program and thereby the development of the psychology workforce.

There are many senior practitioners in the field of educational and developmental psychology who are willing and able to supervise higher degree students, but do not hold AoP endorsement. The proposed changes will allow access to these potential supervisors and their expertise.

We are in support of the new guidelines as the advantageous outcomes for the program are clear.



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.

The combining of BAS categories ensures greater clarity of supervisor requirements. The requirement to have held general registration for three years is considered adequate for supervision of higher degree students as it will enable greater breadth of supervision experiences for students.

However, in maintaining high standards of practice that align with the educational and developmental psychology competencies we believe a proportion of supervision should be provided by an endorsed supervisor. In consideration of the current number of supervisors with AoP endorsement, we propose that at least 25% of the practicum hours (250 of 1000 hours) are conducted under the supervision of an endorsed supervisor.

Thank you for your consideration of our submission.

Sincerely,

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