

# Submission in response to Consultation Paper 12

## Exposure Draft: Guideline for Supervisors and Supervisor Training

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Professor Brin Grenyer,  
Chair, Psychology Board of Australia  
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Dear Professor Grenyer,

We appreciate the opportunity to respond to the Psychology Board of Australia's (the Board) Consultation Paper 12 on the Guideline for Supervisors and Supervisor Training Providers. Whilst such training seems prudent for those supervising within the 4+2 scheme, it would seem unnecessary for supervisors operating within the higher education sector. Supervisors of student placements within higher education offer their time at no cost and are already subject to a range of requirements clearly set out by the Australian Psychological Accreditation Council (APAC). These requirements have become increasingly rigorous over time and as a result there has been a decline in the number of willing supervisors within this pathway. The introduction of lengthy training is likely to reduce these numbers even more and seems at odds with government initiatives to increase the number of practising psychologists.

According to the APAC guidelines, all placements must be supervised by a field supervisor who is formally recognised by the institution/university offering the course. As a University offering such a course, we retain a copy of each supervisor's curriculum vitae and have a strong understanding of our supervisors' background and experience. Our supervisors have had extensive experience within their specialty and represent a range of organisational psychology domains. If we are introduced to a new supervisor, we usually interview this individual as part of a panel to determine whether they can provide students with appropriate opportunities and support. Within the organisational psychology stream, we find that the supervisors are very experienced in mentoring/developing others as it is usually part of their ongoing practice. All the supervisors utilised by Deakin carefully abide by the Code of Ethics espoused by the Australian Psychological Society and the Board, and also possess the competencies articulated in Consultation Paper 12.

Additionally, in line with the APAC guidelines, placement co-ordinators are appointed within higher education to guide the supervision process. These individuals are well qualified and it is with their assistance that field supervisors manage the supervisory process, assess the supervisee and evaluate the supervisory process. It would seem that many of the competencies articulated in Consultation Paper 12 are based on the APAC standards, and these are currently being managed successfully by placement co-ordinators, in conjunction with field supervisors. We recommend that training in these elements should only be pursued where placement co-ordinators are not present to guide the

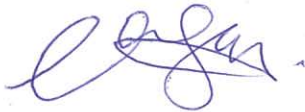
supervision process, or alternatively only the placement co-ordinators themselves should be required to undertake the training as these individuals are already in the key role of managing this overall process.

Finally, universities undertake regular audits of supervisors by both formal and informal means. At Deakin, group supervision sessions which are held twice per semester provide an informal method of reporting any issues with regards to supervision. Data collected anonymously from the students at the end of their placements provides a formal means of monitoring supervisors. We also meet with our supervisors at the beginning and end of each individual placement to ensure that both our supervisors and students are well supported. This provides an additional opportunity to review and reflect on the supervision experience.

It is with utmost confidence in our supervisors and their practices that we ask for an exemption from the training proposed in Consultation Paper 12.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the Guideline for Supervisors and Supervisor Training Providers.

Yours sincerely,



Sophie Keele and Vanessa Sturre