

## From the Chair

### The importance of consultation

The Psychology Board of Australia holds ongoing discussions with registrants and stakeholders about its work, plans and proposals related to the regulation of psychology in Australia. In fact, the Board is required to do so under the National Law, which states, 'If a National Board develops a registration standard or a code or guideline, it must ensure there is wide-ranging consultation about its content'.

Since its establishment in 2009 the Board has issued 13 consultation papers about its work. All written responses to its consultation papers (which number over 300) are also published on its website (under [www.psychologyboard.gov.au/News/Past-Consultations.aspx](http://www.psychologyboard.gov.au/News/Past-Consultations.aspx)), unless the authors request they not be published. These papers and their attendant responses make fascinating reading. They also identify who are the major stakeholders interested in the Board's work.

In addition to the formal process of issuing papers and seeking written input, the Board consults by holding public forums in every state and territory, most recently in Launceston, Hobart and Sydney. More than 1,500 registrants have attended across the country. The Board also meets on a regular basis with major professional groups, societies, education providers and students, other health professional groups, international regulators, the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council, workforce advisors, and departmental secretaries and ministers of major portfolios including health, education and community services. In addition, the Board

receives and responds to a very large amount of written correspondence every month. The Board is grateful for the excellent administrative support of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA), and the high level of engagement from the profession and the public. Productive dialogue with interested and engaged individuals and organisations enables the Board to adopt a position that is as fair and reasonable as possible in fulfilling its major roles: the protection of the public and guidance of the profession.

Professor Brin Grenyer  
Chair, Psychology Board of  
Australia



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## Board events

The Board received an overwhelming response to its April forum in Sydney, which was attended by more than 280 psychologists. Topics covered included supervision and supervisor recognition, the national psychology examination, specialist recognition, provisional registration (including 4+2 and 5+1 pathways), and mandatory reporting.

The presentation slides from the Sydney forum can be found in the [Fact sheets and FAQ](#) section on the Board website.



Chair of the Psychology Board of Australia, Professor Brin Grenyer, presenting at the Sydney forum, April 2012.

## Upcoming events

The NSW Regional Board of the Psychology Board of Australia will be holding a forum in Albury, NSW, on Tuesday 11 September 2012. Details on how to register for the event will be published on the Board's website in the near future. Registrants will also have the opportunity to meet with the NSW Regional Board over an informal dinner following the event. Forum attendance will be free of charge, however the dinner will be at registrant's own cost.

## Regional Board Chair profile



**Robert Schweitzer** is currently an Associate Professor in the School of Psychology and Counselling at the Queensland University of Technology, where he established the postgraduate program in

clinical psychology. His research focuses upon refugee related issues and psychotherapy process and outcome. He has particular interests in qualitative and phenomenological approaches to research. He is currently Chair of the Queensland Regional Board of the Psychology Board of Australia.

## Consultations: have your say

To maintain contact with the Board's work, a monthly communiqué is posted on its website. Consultation papers when released are also announced on the website. The Board recently consulted on options for refining international criminal history checks used to assess applications for registration. The consultation closed 17 August 2012 and the Board will keep the profession informed as a position develops. To read new and past consultations go to the [News](#) section of the Board website.

## FEATURE: Key areas of work

### Review of the 4+2 internship program

In the November 2011 edition of *Connections* the Board requested feedback from interns, supervisors, new registrants, employers and other interested persons on the draft *Guidelines for the 4+2 internship program: provisional psychologists and supervisors*. The Board was pleased to receive more than 30 submissions from a wide range of stakeholders, including a variety of government departments and public sector employers, psychology employers in the private sector, professional associations, and individual supervisors and provisional psychologists. The Board was impressed with the quality of the submissions and would like to thank everyone who took the time to provide this valuable feedback.

At its first meeting of 2012 in February the Board reviewed the submissions and established the Internship Review Working Party comprising Board members with experience as supervisors in the 4+2 pathway. The role of the working party is to undertake detailed analysis of the issues and provide advice to the Board on the review of the Guidelines.

The Working Party has been meeting twice monthly to analyse the submissions and other feedback and has determined that the following are key themes for the review:

- hours for the internship
- key definitions including 'psychological practice', 'client', 'client contact', 'supervision', and 'professional development'
- practice across the lifespan and the Limited work role policy
- supervisor responsibilities
- supervision requirements
- reporting and paperwork requirements, and
- linkage between the internship and the national psychology examination.

The working party is currently focusing on development of definitions and various proposals to address the major issues within the framework of the Board's *Provisional registration standard*.

The Board expects to undertake further consultation on proposals to amend the Guideline in early 2013.

### Reminder for pre-1 July 2010 4+2 internships

Provisional psychologists who are still undertaking an internship that commenced pre-1 July 2010 are reminded there is less than one year to go before the transition arrangements for completion of the internship program come to an end.

Provisional psychologists who are completing a supervision program that was approved by a state or territory board before 30 June 2010 (or 17 October 2010 in Western Australia), and which they were part way through completing when national registration and accreditation commenced in that state or territory, are permitted to complete the program under the terms and conditions approved by the previous board. Under these transition provisions the provisional psychologist must complete the supervision program and apply for General registration before 30 June 2013, which is now less than one year away.

Written requests for an extension to continue supervision beyond 30 June 2013 due to special circumstances will be considered by the relevant regional board of the Psychology Board of Australia. However approval of such requests is at the discretion of the regional board and you may be required to change to the Psychology Board of Australia internship program instead.

### Supervisor training

#### What is happening with supervisor approval and training?

The Psychology Board of Australia (the Board) has previously held two consultations on the *Guideline for Supervisors and Supervisor Training Providers*. The submissions to Consultation Paper 3 (in 2010) and Consultation Paper 12 (in 2012) can be found at: [www.psychologyboard.gov.au/News/Past-Consultations.aspx](http://www.psychologyboard.gov.au/News/Past-Consultations.aspx).

The analysis of feedback to *Consultation Paper 12* identified a range of stakeholder concerns, including issues around the content of supervisor training courses, the methods of course delivery and assessment, timeframes and transition issues for rollout, and the need to take into account the expertise of experienced supervisors.

The Board has recently agreed the following recommendations from its Supervisor Training Working Party (STWP):

- to consider including provisions for recognition of prior learning and training (RPL) in the Guideline
- to expand the application guidelines for Board-approved supervisor training to differentiate and address the training needs of psychologists with different levels of experience and prior training in supervision
- to ensure that the structure of training for supervisors be tailored to identify and address any identified gaps in supervisor skills and knowledge
- to clarify policies and processes for revoking Board-approved supervisor status, and
- to consider transition timeframes and requirements.

The STWP is currently developing the *Guideline for Supervisors and Supervisor Training Providers* to take this feedback into consideration, and will present proposals for a revision of the Guideline to the Board shortly.

At its June 2012 meeting the Board accepted recommendations from the STWP for transition arrangements for supervisors holding Board approval as at 1 July 2013, in response to stakeholder feedback. The following wording will thus appear in the final Guideline, reflecting the Board's decision.

### Transition arrangements

*Being a supervisor is a rewarding and fulfilling opportunity to give back to the profession, and support the training of the next generation of psychologists. In recognition of this, from 1 July 2013 the Board will approve quality training programs in psychology supervision to further enhance the skills and confidence of supervisors in their important role. To ensure that trainees and others requiring approved supervision have access to sufficient supervisors, the Board has approved a transition phase for implementing Board-approved supervision training for supervisors.*

### Current Board-approved supervisors

*Any psychologist, who on 30 June 2013 appears on the Psychology Board of Australia list of approved supervisors, can continue to be a supervisor for up to five years. From 1 July 2013 new Board-approved supervisor training programs*

*will be available, and completion of an approved program is required within this five year period to maintain supervisor status. Supervisor training programs have been developed in order to further support supervisors in recognition of the important role they play in the training and development of the profession, and will incorporate the important changes to legislation and the practice of psychology brought about since national registration commenced on the 1 July 2010.*

*It is the individual supervisor's responsibility to undertake their own self-assessment of their skills and knowledge, and to choose the best time to undertake training. Some supervisors may decide to undertake training soon after 1 July 2013 in order to benefit from the content of the new supervisor training programs. Others, particularly those who have completed Board-approved training recently (e.g. since 1 July 2010), may wish to wait for several years to undertake this training. The Board's principle is that supervisor training should be undertaken every five years, and this should guide an individual's decision about when to enrol in training. Once training has been completed, the Board-approved supervisor status will continue for a further five years from that date. For example, a supervisor completing training on 1 February 2014 will have approval until 1 February 2019, by which time they will be required to have undertaken further training.*

*Any psychologist who is approved by a higher degree institution to act as a supervisor for higher degree placements can continue to provide that supervision without Board approval until 30 June 2013. Psychologists who provide supervision for higher degree placements only, and who did not transition to the list of approved supervisors because higher degree supervisors did not previously need Board approval in their state or territory, will need to apply to be added to the list before 1 July 2013 using form ABAS - 76: Application to act as a Board approved supervisor. If an application within this category is made after 30 June 2013, the supervisor training requirements defined in this Guideline will apply.*

### Psychologists wishing to become Board - approved supervisors prior to 1 July 2013

*Psychologists who do not currently appear on the Psychology Board of Australia list of approved supervisors and who wish to become an approved supervisor before 1 July 2013 can apply to the Board using form ABAS-76: Application to act as a Board approved supervisor, demonstrating that they meet the prescribed requirements. Once they are entered onto the Psychology Board of Australia list of approved supervisors, these supervisors will then be required to participate in the five year cycle of supervisor training prior to 1 July 2018. It is the individual supervisor's responsibility to identify when it is appropriate for them to undertake supervisor training within this timeframe although if they have not previously had any supervisor training then it is recommended they undertake such training within the first year (i.e. between 1 July 2013 - 1 July 2014).*

Following on from this decision the Board determined to release a fact sheet about transition to the new supervisor training guidelines and to update the current *Fact sheet for supervisors*. This information is published on the website.

### Next steps

Later in 2012, the Board will publish the final *Guideline for Supervisors and Supervisor Training Providers*. It will include more detailed information about the issues raised above, including a clear course of action on transition to the new Guideline.

The Board will also finalise an application and approvals process for Board-approved supervisor training providers, including the finalisation of an Expression of Interest (EOI) process. It is expected that there will be EOI submitted by training providers from a wide range of geographic locations, employment areas (eg. university-based, private organisations), and training models.

The Board is aware that there are only 12 months until the new training guideline is to be implemented (July 2013), and would like to assure the profession that it is committed to having realistic timeframes for transition to the new national supervision training regulations.

### What should I do between now and July 2013?

The Board agreed to provide interim approval until 30 June 2013 for existing supervisor training programs originating in Queensland, NSW and Tasmania. These programs may be offered in any state or territory. The programs with interim approval are:

- the Supervisor Training and Accreditation Program (STAP) - originating in Queensland, and
- the NSW Psychologists Registration Board's supervision workshops - originating in NSW and also offered in Tasmania at the time of transition (30 June 2010).

Board approved supervisors are encouraged to keep their training current. Those wishing to become supervisors between now and July 2013 are encouraged to undertake one of the supervisor training programs that have interim approval. In any event, new applicants should consult the requirements detailed in the Board form *ABAS 76: Application to act as a Board approved supervisor* and take steps to ensure they meet these requirements before making an application.

After July 2013, new applicants will have to show that they have completed Board-approved supervisor training.

Supervisors are encouraged to read the following documents on the Board's website at [www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Registration/Supervision.aspx](http://www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Registration/Supervision.aspx):

- *Fact Sheet for supervisors* (recently updated to reflect transition arrangements)

- *Guideline for supervisors and supervisor training providers* past consultations, and
- information on the supervision requirements for the 4+2 and 5+1 internship programs and the registrar program.

### National psychology examination

Consistent with its mission to regulate psychologists in Australia in the interest of the public, the Psychology Board of Australia (the Board) aims to promote a competent and flexible psychology workforce that meets the current and future needs of the Australian community. General registration as a psychologist requires six years of training, but at present there are multiple pathways to achieve that training.

The 5th and 6th years of training, during which professional practice skills of psychologists are required, are currently provided by both accredited and unaccredited training options. The proposed national psychology examination will test the application of psychological knowledge gained in these years and the focus will be on testing applied psychological knowledge and judgement which form the basis of competence in the profession.

The national psychology examination is a mechanism for measurement of a minimum level of applied professional knowledge of psychology and competence that is acceptable for *general registration* in the profession in order to ensure the protection of the public (see the *General Registration Standard* at [www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Standards-and-Guidelines/Registration-Standards](http://www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Standards-and-Guidelines/Registration-Standards)).

The Board has established the National Psychology Examination Committee that has been meeting bi-monthly since February 2011. The Committee consists of nine members from both the Board and external senior members of the profession with expertise in professional training and assessment. The Committee's main task at the present time is to develop a curriculum for the examination and examination items.

The Board has published two consultation papers on the proposed curriculum for the national psychology exam (April 2011 and November 2011). These consultation papers have proposed that it will examine ethical, legal and professional conduct, assessment and measurement, service delivery and intervention strategies, capabilities, professional development, research, and evaluation skills.

It is anticipated that the examination will apply to: provisional psychologists in the 4+2 and 5+1 internship pathway who are applying for general registration; the assessment of overseas-trained psychologists; assessing a practitioner's knowledge where there have been questions of performance and/or a notification made against the practitioner; and return to work assessments after lengthy periods without practicing.

In accordance with stakeholder feedback, the Board has proposed to apply an exemption from sitting the examination for graduates of accredited Masters, Doctorate or combined Masters/Doctorate programs who apply for general registration until 30 June 2016. This exemption is based on the Board’s view that the internal examination and assessment processes within accredited degree programs currently meet the Board’s standards for general registration. Further details on the operationalisation, transition issues and proposed policies governing the introduction of the national psychology examination will be published in the future.

The curriculum for the national psychology examination is now available on the Board’s website and currently applies to all candidates preparing for the examination. The curriculum will be reviewed every three years and candidates will be notified of changes well in advance of any new curriculum being implemented in future. The Board has also released a recommended reading list for the examination. It will be updated as required and the Board welcomes recommendations for additional readings. The curriculum and the reading list are published under National Psychology Examination in the *Registration* section of the Board’s website.

## Ministerial Council approval of the revised provisional registration standard, PII standard and new PII guideline

The Psychology Board of Australia (the Board) has recently published its revised *Professional indemnity insurance arrangements registration standard* and *Provisional registration standard*, which were both recently approved by all Australian Health Ministers and came in to effect on 1 June 2012.

The *Provisional registration standard* has been updated to include the requirements of the new 5+1 pathway following a public consultation in 2011. Now that the requirements have been approved, the Board will develop a guideline for the +1 internship year and intends to publish a consultation paper on the proposed guideline later this year. The 5+1 guideline will be implemented by the end of 2012 when the first cohort of students enrolled in the new 5th year Graduate Diplomas are expected to complete their degrees.

The *Professional indemnity insurance arrangements registration standard* (the PII standard) has been amended in response to significant feedback from government employers, insurance providers and brokers, and individual practitioners regarding the implementation of the new PII requirements under the National Scheme. The Board has undertaken extensive consultation on the proposals including two public consultation papers, and has taken legal advice and expert advice from the insurance sector.

Meeting the PII standard is a requirement of psychology registration. All psychologists, including provisional psychologists, must ensure they are familiar with the provisions of the standard and must not practice the profession unless PII arrangements are in place that meet the requirements of the PII standard. The onus is on individual psychologists to ensure they have appropriate PII cover for each practice and job they hold, including voluntary work. Psychologists are required to declare on their annual renewal that they have met, and will continue to meet the PII requirements and the National Board will conduct random audits of psychologists’ PII arrangements following the next renewal in November 2012 to ensure the requirements are being met.

To support the implementation of the new PII registration standard, the National Board has also published a *Guideline on professional indemnity insurance for psychologists*, which clarifies the requirements of the new standard. This information provides guidance on PII to psychologists, employers of psychologists, higher education providers and insurance providers.

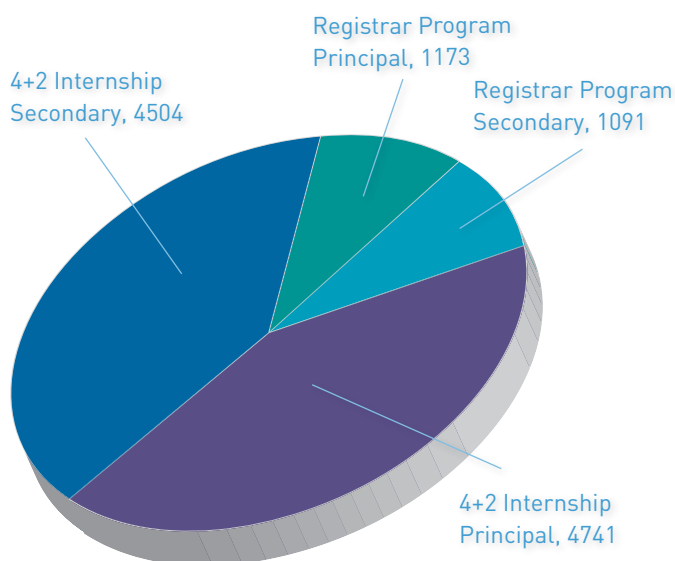
See the Standards and Guidelines section of the Board’s website for copies of these publications.

## First national statistics on psychology supervisors published

The Psychology Board of Australia recently published the first national data on approved psychology supervisors in Australia.

Approved supervisors are registered psychologists who have been approved by the National Board in one or more supervision categories, such as principal or secondary supervision for the Registrar program or the 4+2 Internship program.

### Supervisor Type



These data show that there are approximately 5,300 individual Board-approved supervisors in Australia, and that the majority of psychology supervisors are approved in more than one supervision category.

These data are able to be collated for the first time as a result of the National Scheme and after extensive technology improvements. Their publication follows the launch in January this year of a searchable online supervisor list.

Chair of the Psychology Board of Australia, Professor Brin Grenyer, said that with psychology as the third largest health profession in Australia, with close to 30,000 registrants, it was important to ensure that all training pathways leading to registration were well supported with supervisors.

'It is pleasing that nearly one in four psychologists are listed as approved supervisors for general registration and are prepared to give back their expertise to training the next generation of practitioners,' Professor Grenyer said.

In addition to the data on supervision categories published by the National Board, the Board also approves supervisors for the 5+1 Internship (which is under development), for higher degree placements (Board

approval required from 30 June 2013), and for working in addition to placements which has only recently been defined as a unique supervisor category. Statistics for these categories will be available in the future.

The National Board will continue to publish updates on supervisor statistics on its website.

#### For more information

- Read the data on supervisors published on the National Board's website at [www.psychologyboard.gov.au/About/Statistics.aspx](http://www.psychologyboard.gov.au/About/Statistics.aspx)
- Search the approved supervisors list at [www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Registration/Supervision/Search.aspx](http://www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Registration/Supervision/Search.aspx)
- Apply to become an approved supervisor – download the application form from the website at [www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Registration/Supervision.aspx](http://www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Registration/Supervision.aspx)
- Lodge an online enquiry form under *Contact us* at [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au) or call: 1300 419 495 (within Australia) or +61 3 8708 9001 (overseas callers) or email us at [psychologysupervisor@ahpra.gov.au](mailto:psychologysupervisor@ahpra.gov.au).

