



## Guidelines for supervisors and supervisor training providers

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## Introduction

The Psychology Board of Australia (Board) has developed these guidelines under section 39 of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory ([the National Law](#)).

These guidelines contain detailed information on:

- requirements for supervisors
- requirements for supervisor training providers, and
- revoking Board-approved training status.

This document also includes useful definitions and attachments related to these guidelines.

### Who the guidelines apply to

These Board guidelines for supervisors and supervisor training providers apply to three groups:

- psychologists who are Board-approved supervisors
- psychologists who want to become Board-approved supervisors, and
- individuals and organisations seeking Board approval to provide supervision training programs.

It is important that anyone who falls within the three groups understands these guidelines and their requirements.

### About the guidelines

Under the National Law, the Board may grant approved supervisor status to a psychologist with knowledge, skills and training in the provision of supervision. Section 35(1)(b) of the National Law specifies that a function of a National Board is to decide the requirements for registration or endorsement of registration in the profession, including the arrangements for supervised practice.

The sections of the National Law relevant to supervision and supervision training programs are set out in [Attachment A](#) of this document.

The Board held two public consultations on earlier versions of these guidelines. This document takes into account the feedback received during the consultations.<sup>1</sup>

The Board accepted these guidelines for supervisors and supervisor training providers at its March 2013 meeting. The guidelines are currently in force and will undergo review every three years.

The Board has established other policies relevant to supervision in the following standards:

- *Provisional registration standard*
- *General registration standard*
- *Area of practice endorsements registration standard*
- *Guidelines for the 4+2 internship program: provisional psychologists and supervisors* (under review)
- *Guidelines for the 5+1 internship program* (in development), and
- *Guidelines on area of practice endorsements*.

Board registration standards and guidelines are published under the *Standards and guidelines* tab on the [Board website](#).

### A competency-based approach to supervision and supervisor training

A number of different supervision models existed across Australia before national registration began in 2010 (see [Attachment B](#) for more information). However, all supervisors fell under the respective state/territory codes of professional conduct and ethics, which required psychologists to practise within their competencies.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information please see the *Supervision* page under the *Registration* tab on the Board's website at: [www.psychologyboard.gov.au](http://www.psychologyboard.gov.au).

The Board recognises the importance of providing a consistent framework and method of supervision practice across Australia. Since the start of the National Scheme in 2010 it has established:

- standards for Board-approved supervisor qualifications
- Board-approved supervisor competencies, and
- Board approval of supervisor training programs.

The Board also recognises that the knowledge and skills required to provide adequate supervision are advanced and complex. From 1 July 2013, the Board will require all supervisors, including higher degree practicum supervisors, to successfully complete training in competency-based supervision and to update their training every five years.

Supervision is a critical mechanism in facilitating the provision of high quality education and training and ongoing safe practice of psychology.<sup>2</sup> Consistent with this, Board-approved supervisors are publically identifiable on the Board's website. Under the National Law, the Board establishes the standard of psychological competencies required for:

- general registration as a psychologist, and
- area of practice endorsement.

Supervisors play a key role in training psychologists and assessing these competencies. The Board supports a competency-based approach to supervision training.

In order to provide effective supervision, supervisors must have demonstrated:

- proficiency in the areas of professional practice in which the supervisee is engaged, and
- competencies that are specific to providing supervision.

The Board seeks to implement nationally consistent standards for supervisor training and evaluation by requiring supervision training programs to have:

- an explicit framework
- evidence-based methods of supervision practice
- nationally consistent standards for supervisor training, and
- mechanisms for outcome evaluation.

This aligns with increased emphasis on evidence-based practice, including the necessity to determine outcomes for supervision training in Australia.

## Requirements for supervisors

### Summary of requirements for supervisors

From 1 July 2013, a Board-approved supervision training program (which is referred to as 'full training') must be successfully completed by registered psychologists to be eligible to supervise provisionally or generally registered psychologists undertaking:

- a 4+2 or 5+1 internship program
- Board-approved, accredited higher degree programs
- a registrar program leading to endorsement in an approved area of practice, or
- professional higher degree placements.

Board-approved supervisors must demonstrate proficiency in the following competencies:

1. knowledge and understanding of the profession

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<sup>2</sup> The first objective of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme) is to protect the public by ensuring that only practitioners who are suitably trained and qualified to practise in a competent and ethical manner are registered.

2. knowledge of and skills in effective supervision practices
3. knowledge of and ability to develop and manage the supervisory alliance
4. ability to assess the psychological competencies of the supervisee
5. capacity to evaluate the supervisory process
6. awareness of and attention to the diversity of client groups, and
7. ability to address the legal and ethical considerations related to the professional practice of psychology.

### Applications for Board-approved supervisor status

The Board has published a list of Board-approved supervisors on its website since January 2012. Psychologists who wish to apply to become Board approved, and Board-approved supervisors who wish to appear on the Board's approved supervisor list on the Board's website, can apply using *Form ABAS-76* under [Requirements for supervisors](#).

Supervisors who wish to become Board approved after 1 July 2013 are required to complete one full Board-approved training course before they can apply to become Board-approved supervisors. They must then complete a minimum of one master class every five years to update their knowledge and skills, in order to maintain Board approval.

Transitional arrangements have been made for supervisors who are already Board approved **before** 1 July 2013. These are outlined below in the section entitled 'Requirements for supervisors who hold Board approval on 30 June 2013' on page 9 of these guidelines.

### Exclusions from these requirements

Supervision that occurs in other settings does not need to be provided by a Board-approved supervisor, except when directed by the Board. The following types of supervisors do not need to be approved by the Board to undertake their work:

- supervisors of a research dissertation
- line managers
- supervisors providing supervision for the purposes of general continuing professional development (CPD) peer consultation, and
- supervisors approved by the Board to provide supervision and training to individual psychologists practising under conditions arising from disciplinary action.

### Supervisor competencies

Supervisors should be able to demonstrate an understanding of the fundamental principles of competency-based supervision. This includes knowledge of discrete psychological abilities that incorporate the specific knowledge, skills and attitudes required to perform high quality professional psychology activities.

The supervisor competencies are as follows.

#### 1. Knowledge and understanding of the profession

Knowledge and understanding of:

- psychological theories and models, empirical evidence for the theories and models and their application to practice and research
- ethical, legal and professional matters
- psychological assessment and measurement relevant to psychological settings and research
- the range of intervention strategies available to a variety of client groups within different settings

- research and evaluation, including the systematic identification, critical appraisal and application of relevant research evidence
- communication and interpersonal relationships, including the ability to communicate in written and oral form from a psychological perspective in a style appropriate to a variety of different audiences, and to interact professionally with a wide range of client groups and other professionals
- working in a cross-cultural context, including demonstrating core capabilities to adequately practise with clients from cultures and lifestyles different from the psychologist's own, and
- practise across the lifespan, which involves demonstrating the core capabilities with clients in childhood, adolescence, adulthood and late adulthood relevant to the supervisee's supervision plan.

## **2. Knowledge of and skills in effective supervision practices**

- Establishing goals and objectives in supervision, including agenda setting, monitoring and record keeping.
- Knowledge of learning processes in supervision, including knowledge of developmental models and methods of supervision.
- Techniques for enhancing the development of the supervisee's competencies, including observation, modelling, feedback, micro-skills training and relationship skills training.

## **3. Knowledge of and ability to develop and manage the supervisory relationship**

- Establishing and strengthening supervisory relationship, including knowledge of the stages and development of the supervisory relationship.
- Demonstrated skills in reflective practice, including openness to feedback and capacity to utilise peer consultation and supervision of supervision.
- Ability to identify and manage personal factors and self-disclosure that affect the supervisory alliance, including addressing problems or ruptures in the supervisory relationship.

## **4. Ability to assess the psychological competencies of the supervisee**

- Demonstrated ability to effectively review and evaluate the competencies of the supervisee, including knowledge of effective evaluation methods.
- Demonstrated ability to provide effective feedback to the supervisee, including demonstrated skills in communication and critical feedback.
- Demonstrated ability to address problems related to competencies, including skills in addressing problems related to the supervisee not meeting minimal core competencies.

## **5. Capacity to evaluate the supervisory process**

- Knowledge of the supervisory process, including skills in identifying expectations and responsibilities of both the supervisor and supervisee.
- Demonstrated capacity to respond to supervisee feedback to improve supervisory practice.
- Demonstrated skills in reflective practice.

## **6. Awareness of and attention to diversity**

- Attention to diversity in supervision, including the supervisory process and supervisory relationship.

- Awareness of the impact of diversity and difference (including age) when working with a range of clients in a range of services.
- Attention to the development of cultural competency in supervisees.

## **7. Ability to address the legal and ethical considerations related to the professional practice of psychology**

- Understanding of how ethical principles and relevant statutory requirements are used to guide professional practice and supervision.
- Knowledge of limits of competence and personal limitations that may affect work with supervisees.

### **General requirements of supervisors**

It is the supervisor's responsibility to:

- ensure the supervisee has adequate knowledge of relevant research, theory and policy before providing any particular client intervention
- ensure the supervisee has access to strategies to develop appropriate intervention models
- bring to the supervisee's attention any limitations of competence, ethical difficulty, personal bias or aspect of personal development in the supervisee that the supervisor perceives to be affecting the supervisee's professional development and/or professional application
- offer sufficient supervision opportunities to enable regular evaluation of applications of the core competencies
- directly observe supervisee's work as part of the supervision process; this may include observation electronically, and
- view active client files of the supervisee intermittently as part of the supervision process.

### **Specific requirements of supervisors**

It is the supervisor's responsibility to meet the specific requirements set out in the relevant guidelines, including:

- *Guidelines on area of practice endorsements*
- *4+2 internship program*
- *5+1 internship program*
- *National psychology exam curriculum and guidelines*
- *Guidelines for supervisors and supervisor training providers* (this document), and
- *Board-approved, accredited higher degree program requirements.*

### **Supervisor qualifications**

#### **Internship programs 4+2 and 5+1**

The Board may approve a psychologist to supervise provisionally registered psychologists in the 4+2 and 5+1 internship program, when the supervisor:

- has held general registration for at least three years before starting supervision as a principal supervisor, and at least two years before starting as a secondary supervisor
- has successfully completed a Board-approved training program (full training) in psychology supervision (note: transition provisions apply, please see section 'Requirements for supervisors who hold Board approval on 30 June 2013' on page 9 of these guidelines)
- does not have any conditions on their registration

- is not a member of the supervisee's immediate family or household, and
- has not been, or is not currently engaged in, a close personal or therapeutic relationship with the supervisee.

### **Higher degree program supervisors**

The Board requires practicum supervisors of higher degree students undertaking a pathway to registration or area of practice endorsement to be Board approved.

Supervisors must:

- have held general registration as a psychologist for at least three years before beginning supervision
- hold endorsement in the approved area of practice for at least two years before beginning supervision and continue to be endorsed throughout the period of supervision (note: holding an area of practice endorsement is not required for higher degree supervisors providing supervision to provisional psychologists in the 5+1 pathway)
- have successfully completed a Board-approved training program (full training) in psychology supervision (note: transition provisions apply, please see section 'Requirements for supervisors who hold Board approval on 30 June 2013' on page 9 of these guidelines)
- not have any conditions on their registration
- not be a member of the supervisee's immediate family or household, and
- not have been, or not be, engaged in a close personal or therapeutic relationship with the supervisee.

Exemptions from these requirements will apply in specific circumstances as agreed with the accreditation agency.

### **Registrar program (area of practice endorsement) supervisors**

The Board may approve a psychologist as the principal supervisor for registrar programs in an approved area of practice endorsement, when the supervisor:

- has held general registration as a psychologist for at least three years before beginning supervision (note: secondary supervisors must have held registration for at least two years)
- has held endorsement in an approved area of practice for at least two years before beginning supervision and continues to be endorsed throughout the period of supervision (note: principal supervisors and supervisees need to hold matching endorsements, whereas secondary supervisors do not need to hold an endorsement or matching endorsement)
- has successfully completed a Board-approved training program (full training) in psychology supervision (note: transition provisions apply, please see section 'Requirements for supervisors who hold Board approval on 30 June 2013' on page 9 of these guidelines)
- does not have any conditions on their registration
- is not a member of the supervisee's immediate family or household, and
- has not been, or is not currently engaged in a close personal or therapeutic relationship with the supervisee.

### **Maintaining approved supervisor status**

Approved supervisors will be required to renew their status every five years. This is consistent with the *Recency of practice registration standard* that requires psychologists to demonstrate satisfactory evidence of recent practice within a five-year timeframe.

When applying for renewal, supervisors are required to provide a declaration about:

- the number of psychologists they have supervised in the preceding five-year period, and
- how their supervised practice and professional development have been maintained.

Supervisors are also required to provide evidence of completion of Board-approved supervision training, as follows:

- evidence of completion of Board-approved master class within five years of gaining Board approval (for those who gained Board approval after 1 July 2013), or
- evidence of completion of a Board-approved master class by 2018 for those holding Board approval on 1 July 2013.

An approved supervisor is not limited in the number of master classes that can be completed but must complete one in every five year period. To meet this requirement, an approved supervisor may choose to:

- complete one Board-approved master class (meets the requirement)
- complete more than one Board-approved master class (exceeds the requirement), or
- if the supervisor wishes to do the full training again, with the same or different Board-approved training provider as the first time, they may do so (exceeds the requirement).

When making a choice about whether to complete the master class (minimum requirement) or complete training that exceeds the requirement, supervisors may wish to consider the following:

- self assessment (against the seven supervisor competencies)
- self assessment (noting any changes to current work, interests, etc.)
- length of time since full training was first undertaken
- knowledge of changes to the Board's registration standards, codes and guidelines
- learning outcomes noted in the supervisor's learning plan for CPD, and
- nature of supervision being provided (such as feedback from supervisees, location and content of supervision being provided).

### **Continuing professional development (CPD) and supervisor training programs**

Completion of supervisor training programs may be incorporated into supervisors' learning plans and count towards their mandatory CPD requirements for the year.

The supervisor training 'full training' programs will count towards general CPD. Supervisor training master classes will usually count towards general CPD, not towards CPD for an area of practice endorsement.

### **Requirements for supervisors who hold Board approval on 30 June 2013**

#### **Transition period**

All supervisors who hold Board approval on 30 June 2013 will remain Board approved. They can continue to be supervisors for up to five years (until 1 July 2018) before they must provide evidence of having completed a Board-approved master class. Completing a master class every five years is a requirement for maintaining Board-approved status.

Supervisors who hold Board approval on 30 June 2013 do not need to reapply for approval, nor complete full training.

It is the responsibility of individual supervisors to self-assess their skills and knowledge as a supervisor, and choose the best time to undertake supervisor 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 (such as since 1 July 2010) may wish to wait for several years to undertake this training (but no later than 1 July 2018). However, the Board recommends that approved supervisors who have not previously completed any formal supervisor training should undertake the training within the first year.

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 successfully 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 provided evidence of successfully undertaking further training.

### Applying to become a Board-approved supervisor before 1 July 2013

Psychologists who wish to become an approved supervisor before 1 July 2013 can apply to the Board by completing the *Application to act as a Board-approved supervisor – Form ABAS-76*, and providing the required evidence demonstrating that they meet the prescribed requirements.

Supervisors who hold Board approval on 1 July 2013 will be required to participate in the five-year cycle of supervisor training that begins on 1 July 2013 and must therefore complete an approved supervisor training program (master class) before 1 July 2018.

### Higher degree supervisors

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 and who did not transition to the list of approved supervisors will need to apply to be added to the list before 1 July 2013 using *Form ABAS-76* under [Requirements for supervisors](#) on the Board website. Once approved, they will be added to the list of approved supervisors and will be required to undertake, at minimum, the master class supervisor training every five years, and before 1 July 2018.

Higher degree supervisors who apply to become Board approved after 30 June 2013 will need to undergo full supervisor training **before** they can be approved.

**Table: Summary of transition training requirements for Board-approved supervisors**

Supervisor status	On 1 July 2013	Training requirements (every five years)
<b>Transitioned to the National Scheme as a Board-approved supervisor</b>	No requirement	Complete Board-approved supervisor training (master class) any time before 1 July 2018 (on the basis of self-assessment) and every five years afterwards
<b>Became a new Board-approved supervisor before 30 June 2013 by completing form ABAS-76</b>	No requirement	Complete Board-approved supervisor training (master class) any time before 1 July 2018 (on the basis of self-assessment) and every five years afterwards
<b>Apply for supervisor status after 1 July 2013</b>	Meet new Board requirements for Board-approved supervisors on application after 1 July 2013	Complete Board-approved supervisor training (master class) every five years from date of approval

### Interim supervisor training programs

Since 1 July 2010, the Board has approved the following existing supervisor training programs:

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

These programs may be offered in any state or territory.

The Board has extended the interim approval of these programs until 31 December 2013 to ensure continuity of Board-approved supervisor training for psychologists wishing to apply for Board approval.

After 1 July and before 31 December 2013, participants in the NSW Psychologists Registration Board's supervision workshops (originating in NSW and also offered in Tasmania at the time of transition: 30 June 2010) are required to complete the competency-based assessment and evaluation component equivalent to the Supervisor Training and Accreditation Program (STAP) (originating in Queensland).

### **Discontinuation or revocation of Board-approved supervisor status**

#### **Discontinuation**

If a Board-approved supervisor wants to discontinue their Board approval, they must notify the Board in writing.

**Discontinuing approval status has significant implications for supervisees. Any supervision time spent while the supervisor is not Board approved will not count as supervision time.**

#### **Revocation**

The objective of the National Scheme is to protect the public by ensuring safe and effective psychology practice. Supervisors who fall below acceptable standards will have their supervisor approval revoked.

Board-approved supervisors must:

1. hold and maintain general registration
2. meet the Board's registration standards
3. demonstrate learning in each of the core competencies, as assessed by the training provider
4. complete and pass all components of the full training
5. complete and pass training every five years from the approval date (by successfully completing either at least one master class or the full training)
6. meet the requirements of Board-approved supervisor status as set by these guidelines, and
7. provide information regarding their supervisees in a professional, competent and timely fashion, as required by the Board.

Approved supervisor status may be discontinued or revoked by the Board when a supervisor's registration as a psychologist is:

- suspended
- cancelled
- surrendered
- lapsed
- changed to non-practising, or
- subject to conditions.

The supervisor status of a psychologist may be revoked in the event that:

- an impairment is found to be affecting the psychologist's capacity to practise and supervise
- there is an adverse finding relating to the supervisor's conduct or performance (including actions taken under immediate action under Part 8, Division 7 of the National Law)

- the Board has evidence of the failure of the supervisor to adhere to their responsibilities as a supervisor, or
- on the recommendation of a regional board, panel or tribunal.

If a supervising psychologist fails to meet the requirements and standards set out in these guidelines, the Board may revoke its approval and remove that psychologist from the list of approved supervisors on the website.

The Board may also require supervisors to undertake remedial training, at any stage in their five-year approval cycle, if considered necessary.

**Revocation or discontinuation of approval status has significant implications for supervisees. Supervision time spent where the supervisor is no longer approved will not count as supervision time.**

Practitioners can re-apply for approval as a supervisor when re-applying for general registration or when conditions are removed.

The Board will publish a policy on revoking Board-approved supervisor status.

## Requirements for supervisor training providers

### Summary of supervisor training program requirements

From 1 July 2013, psychologists applying to become a Board-approved supervisor must have completed a Board-approved training program. All Board-approved training programs must meet the requirements in these guidelines, including demonstrating a competency-based approach and high quality training.

An application process will be conducted for those organisations, consortiums and individuals interested in becoming Board-approved training providers. Successful training providers will be authorised by the Board to provide supervision training programs that meet the Board's requirements.

All Board-approved training providers must act in accordance with the Board's registration standards, guidelines, policies and other relevant documents, including the *Guidelines for advertising of regulated health services*. Similarly, Board-approved training providers will emphasise the requirement for supervisors to respect and act in accordance with the ethical standards adopted by the Board and set out in the *Australian Psychological Society (APS) Code of ethics*.

Approved training providers, and the courses for which they have been approved, will be listed on the Board website.

The Board's approval will be time-limited (five years) and training providers will need to re-apply to maintain approval. Programs must remain compliant with these guidelines, otherwise approval may be revoked by the Board.

A Board-approved, competency-based supervisor training program (full training) must consist of:

- knowledge assessment (preparatory work) relating to knowledge of Board guidelines and best-practice supervision methods
- skills training, and
- competency-based assessment of participants.

In addition to the full supervision training, specific training modules may be developed and offered as 'master classes' to meet the various supervisory requirements. These master classes will provide supervisors with an opportunity to reflect on their current practice and to extend their knowledge, skills and training in a particular area of supervision.

All Board-approved supervisors must complete competency-based supervisor training delivered by a Board-approved supervisor training provider every five years in order to maintain their Board-approved supervisor status. This requirement can be met by:

- completing one Board-approved master class (meets requirement), or
- completing the full training with the same or a different Board-approved training provider as the first time (exceeds requirement).

### **Approach to supervision**

Supervisors must be able to develop and assess the necessary competencies in their supervisees for both registration and area of practice endorsement.

Supervisor training must therefore develop discrete abilities that incorporate specific knowledge, skills and attitudes required to perform high quality professional psychology activities. The supervisor competencies that supervisor training providers are required to address are presented earlier in these guidelines.

Supervisor training must adhere to a competency-based model within a best-practice supervision framework.

### **Purpose of supervisor training**

The purpose of Board-approved supervisor training is to equip supervisors with the necessary knowledge and skills to provide competency-based supervision to supervisees undertaking:

- a 4+2 internship program
- 5+1 internship program
- accredited higher degree program, and/or
- registrar program leading to area of practice endorsement.

Depending on which of these pathways the supervisees are taking, the competencies they require will differ in scope. However, the general supervisory competencies required of supervisors apply in all pathways.

The Board expects supervisor training to develop core competencies and skills in supervision. These competencies are explained in the 'Requirements for supervisors' section of these guidelines.

### **Structure, length and delivery of supervisor training**

As there is only very limited research evaluating the optimal length of training for developing supervisor competencies, the Board requires that Board-approved supervisor training consist of:

- initial training and systematic assessment (referred to as 'full training'), and
- master classes undertaken at least every five years.

All Board-approved supervisor training programs should engage supervisors in coursework to develop core competencies, including:

- conceptual knowledge
- skill acquisition, and
- integration of knowledge and skills.

Workshop content may be broken into distinct modules to provide flexible learning arrangements within the Board's guidelines. This may include supervisor training for the:

- registrar program only
- 4+2 and/or 5+1 internship pathways only

- higher degree programs only
- specific groups, or
- a combination of the above.

### Full training

Supervisors undertaking full training for the first time are required to complete the three components of the full training program.

The Board requires that the full training consist of three components:

1. **Knowledge assessment (preparatory work):** this is the primary component for supervisors to acquire knowledge. This component addresses the requirements of all categories of supervisees (i.e. 4+2, 5+1, higher degree and registrar training pathways).

This component requires:

- approximately seven hours of preparatory work (such as reading relevant material, reflection on practice) and will include self-study modules relating to relevant Board guidelines and general supervisor readings, and
- passing a formal online assessment of the self-study modules.

The content required to be assessed includes the administrative requirements of supervision for all programs, legal and ethical issues, and knowledge of relevant guidelines for the internship, registrar and national psychology examination curriculum. It requires the supervisor to complete an online test (such as through an online multiple-choice test). The knowledge assessment will provide assurance that the supervisor is aware of the context for supervision within the National Scheme. For example, the knowledge assessment component should include increasing knowledge about the writing, development, and evaluation of case studies, relevant to the various pathways.

This component must be completed and passed before undertaking the skills training component.

2. **Skills training:** this component must include a minimum of 12 hours' direct training (such as through workshop participation). Any associated tasks given at the training are included in the 12 hours. This component should focus on the development of supervision skills that are appropriate to all supervisee training pathways, and focus on:

- practical skills training for evaluating competencies (such as using active exercises with feedback), and
- developing reflective practice.

The skills training workshops should not be a primary vehicle for knowledge acquisition, which should occur during the knowledge assessment phase, but rather for the integration of knowledge and practice. For example, the skills training component should include a focus on how to address issues arising with supervisees' writing and development of case studies, and how to evaluate case studies in practice.

The Board prefers this skills training to be face to face to allow *in vivo* practice and feedback of supervisory skills in a group workshop, given that supervision itself is also provided face to face.

3. **Competency-based assessment and evaluation:** this component must be submitted no later than three months after the skills training component and involves a systematic assessment of the psychologist demonstrating their supervisory competencies (including the seven competencies mentioned in these guidelines).

This component requires the psychologist undertaking the training to submit an electronic version (such as video/audiotape/DVD) of a supervision session or other competency-based assessment activity to the training provider for evaluation and feedback.

Board-approved training providers for the 'full training' are responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the course content, and must take into account changes to the guidelines,

advancements in supervision training and any changes to relevant Board documents (such as the *Guidelines for the 4+2 internship program: provisional psychologists and supervisors*).

Different training providers may be approved by the Board to provide some or all of the three training components. This means that psychologists going through Board-approved supervisor training may need to enrol with more than one provider to obtain the three required components outlined above. This allows for more choice and flexibility for psychologists, particularly those in regional or rural areas, to meet the Board's training requirements.

Specific training modules related to the various training pathways may be developed and offered. For example, a program designed for psychologists supervising provisional psychologists (in the 4+2 and 5+1 pathways) will focus on supervisor skills in reviewing supervision plans, and may use various learning methods (such as workshop exercises) to ensure learning in this area. A program focused on registrar training may focus on specific areas related to scope of practice (such as relevant assessments).

### **Master classes**

A psychologist can apply to become a Board-approved supervisor once they have completed the full supervisor training and passed all evaluation components.

To maintain their Board-approved supervisor status, supervisors must complete further approved training every five years. The minimum ongoing training required is the completion of one full day of a master class in supervision.

Master classes must:

- run for a minimum of six hours on the one day
- be face to face
- include systematic assessment, and
- include attention to specific, relevant topics.

Examples of topics for such master classes may include:

- reflective practice
- parallel process in the supervisory alliance
- evaluating supervisees
- legal and regulatory responsibilities
- skills associated with remedial supervision
- dealing with difficult supervision situations, and
- providing feedback.

Board-approved training providers for master classes are responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the course content, and must take into account changes to the guidelines, advancements in supervision training and any changes to relevant Board documents (such as the *Guidelines for the 4+2 internship program: provisional psychologists and supervisors*).

### **Location of training**

The Board envisages diversity in the approved programs, with some focusing on individual states or territories, and others with a national focus.

The Board has defined two geographic areas for training, based on workforce and Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data.<sup>3</sup> These include:

1. **metropolitan areas** – that is, metropolitan, major cities, outer suburban and large regional cities), and
2. **regional areas** – outlying suburban, regional areas and towns, outer regional and remote areas.

The Board is committed to ensuring the availability of supervisor training in regional areas, not just metropolitan areas.

### Board-approved supervisor trainer qualifications

All trainers must be competent in providing both training and supervision.

All trainers must:

1. be approved by the Board
2. hold general registration as a psychologist, and
3. be competent in providing training and supervision – trainers must have qualifications in training, and/or experience in training, and must demonstrate skills and competence in providing high quality supervision.

The Board may approve trainers from related professions where supervision and training skills are exemplary (such as trainers with learning and development qualifications). In the case of individuals providing a master class in a specific topic area, the Board recognises that they may not be approved supervisors, but will have particular expertise.

At least one trainer (or training consultant) from any group consortium approved to provide supervisor training must be a psychologist who is a Board-approved supervisor.

Trainers who are not Board-approved supervisors are permitted to run training workshops without being accompanied by a Board-approved supervisor.

### Evaluation and review

#### Assessment of supervisors

Board-approved training providers will be responsible for competency-based training and assessment of psychologists who attend their training.

Thorough assessment of supervisory competence is necessary to ensure that supervisors are adequately equipped to provide supervision in a credentialing environment. Given the role of supervision, the Board is of the view that potential supervisors must be assessed across a number of domains using a range of techniques.

For the full training, assessment of supervisors must include the following:

- a. short answer and/or multiple choice questions relating to administrative, legal and some ethical requirements are to be completed following the online component and before the skills training component
- b. knowledge of supervision principles is to be measured through either multiple choice test, short answer examination, or interview or exercises
- c. supervisory performance is to be measured through assessment of an actual supervision session submitted electronically, and
- d. potential supervisors must receive supervision of their supervision, including direct observation and critical feedback.

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<sup>3</sup> For a definition of 'regional' (ARIA score > .25), consult Mathews et al 2010, p. 162 (Mathews, R, Stokes, DL, Crea, KN, and Grenyer, BFS (2010) 'The Australian Psychology Workforce 1: a national profile of psychologists in practice', *Australian Psychologist* (45), 154-67).

For the master class training, assessment of supervisors must include the following:

- a. knowledge of supervision principles to be measured through either multiple choice, short answer examination, interview or exercises, and
- b. assessment of the supervisor skills involved in providing feedback to the supervisee, relevant to the topic of the master class (for example, if the master class topic is on supervising in the 4+2 internship pathway, the assessment may focus on the skill of providing feedback to supervisees on their case studies).

Trainers must be able to certify that each participant has completed all tasks required during the training. The training providers will be responsible for the administration and assessment of satisfactory completion of the workshop (and a supervisory session for the full training) to a standard approved by the Board.

Providers of a Board-approved supervisor training program will be required to provide participant outcome data to the Board after the completion of each workshop. These data will include the name and assessment outcome for each participant.

### **Evaluation and review of training programs**

Supervisor training is a developing field requiring more research to establish a substantial evidence base. Providers of Board-approved supervisor training programs will be required to submit outcome data to the Board.

Training providers will be expected to collect data on the development of supervisors' competence. Data may be collected through a short-answer test, a multiple-choice test, case studies, and submission of supervision sessions via video recording, as per the reporting requirements above. In addition, the results of all individual assessments and submitted test and electronic materials should be retained by training providers for five years and be made available upon audit or request by the Board.

Providers of a Board-approved supervisor training program will be required to provide details of courses and evaluation data to the Board annually. These details will include information on the number of workshops, location of workshops, number of participants who passed/failed, an evaluation of trainers, an evaluation of the course, and relevant information about complaints handling.

These outcome data may be used by the Board to:

- evaluate each training provider against the Board's requirements in these guidelines and the requirements outlined in the application documents
- compare training providers to investigate consistency of standards across providers, and
- examine broader issues related to the effectiveness of supervisor training, including commissioning research into this area.

The Board will review the proposed supervisor training structure and make recommendations based on its evaluation in three years from 1 July 2013.

### **Approval of supervisor training providers**

The Board has set out a number of requirements in these guidelines, which must be addressed in order to be considered for Board approval as a supervisor training provider.

The Board requires applications from psychologists, or suitably qualified individuals or organisations, to provide supervision training to psychologists in Australia to be made in writing using the appropriate application forms. Details of the application process are on the Board's website. The Board will assess each application against the standards outlined in these guidelines, and may approve multiple providers.

In addition to developing and delivering competency-based best-practice supervision training, the Board requires that supervisor training providers meet the following general requirements concerning their operations, including:

- adequate administrative processes and resourcing – for example, a capacity to deliver courses; secure payment capability; applicant screening, enrolment and support
- secure data management systems and adequate technical capacity
- adequate systems to support customer service – including processes and policies for dispute resolution and complaints handling
- processes and policies concerning confidentiality and privacy issues, conflict of interest
- provision of a timeline for expected development and implementation of training courses
- quality assurance for course delivery concerning both participants and the Board/AHPRA
- financial viability – for example, the organisation, consortium or individual meets tax requirements, business requirements, is financially viable, and provides supervisor training that is competitively priced
- an approach for delivering outcome data to the Board, and
- the sustainability of the program for the approval period (five years).

The above requirements are in general terms only. The application documents will provide more detail on the requirements that training providers will need to meet.

### Revoking Board-approved training status

The objective of the National Scheme is to protect the public by ensuring safe and effective psychology practice. Supervisors who fall below acceptable standards will have their supervisor approval revoked. Supervisor training providers who do not meet the Board's guidelines for high quality training will similarly have their supervisor training approval revoked.

In the event that an individual or organisation fails to provide training in accordance with the guidelines and standards, the Board can revoke its approval and remove the trainer or training provider from the website.

The Board is responsible for formulating and approving these requirements and AHPRA is responsible for ensuring that the requirements are implemented and effectively managed.

Board-approved trainers and organisations must:

1. meet professional registration standards (or have Board approval for exemption)
2. provide the knowledge assessment, skills training, competency assessment and master classes and systematic assessment, as set out in these guidelines
3. facilitate learning in each of the core competencies
4. collect and submit outcome data to the Board in accordance with these guidelines
5. act in accordance with the *Guidelines for advertising of regulated health services* and the *APS Code of ethics*, and
6. meet any other requirements set by the Board.

The training status of an individual Board-approved trainer may be revoked if the trainer is a registered health professional and has an adverse finding against them, either as a service provider or as a supervisor, after a notification or an immediate action matter and on recommendation of a regional board, panel or tribunal.

A training organisation will not necessarily have its approval revoked if one trainer within the organisation has supervisor status revoked, but the organisation will not be able to use the services of

that trainer in any capacity. Determinations will be made by a board or committee of the Psychology Board of Australia in accordance with the National Law.

The Board will publish further information about revoking Board-approved supervisor training provider status along with the application documents for training providers.

## Definitions

In these guidelines, unless inconsistent with the context or subject matter, the following definitions apply.

**Area of practice endorsement** is a means provided for by section 98 of the National Law through which additional qualifications and supervised practice recognised by the Board can be identified to the public, employers, and other users of the public online register of practitioners. Practitioners with an area of practice endorsement have the specific area of practice notated on the public register, and can use the title associated with that area of practice.

**Board** means the Psychology Board of Australia established under section 31 of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

**Board-approved accredited higher degree program** refers to sections 48 and 49 of the National Law, which require that a course be accredited by the accreditation authority for the profession, and subsequently approved by the Psychology Board of Australia, before it can be accepted as a qualification suitable for the purpose of registration as a psychologist. Courses approved by the Board are listed on the Board's website under accreditation. Under section 50 of the National Law, the accreditation agency is required to monitor the program to ensure the relevant courses and the academic organisational unit (AOU) continue to meet accreditation standards.

**Board-approved supervisor** means a supervisor approved by the Board to provide supervision to provisional psychologists in the 4+2 or 5+1 internship program, provisional and/or general psychologists in accredited higher degree programs, and general psychologists undertaking registrar programs leading to an approved area of practice endorsement.

**Competency-based supervision** means an explicit framework and method of supervision practice, and a consistent evaluative and outcome approach to supervision training.

**Full training** means a competency-based, Board-approved supervisor training program that includes three components: knowledge assessment/preparatory work (seven hours), skills training (12 hours), and competency-based assessment and evaluation (completed no later than three months after the skills training). From 1 July 2013, all new Board-approved supervisors must have completed and passed the full training.

**Guidelines** refers to the Psychology Board of Australia *Guidelines for supervisors and supervisor training providers*, and any subsequent amendments approved by the Board

**Internship** means a Board-approved supervised practice program for a provisional psychologist.

**Master class** means a competency-based, Board-approved one-day (six hours) supervisor training program that includes a knowledge and skills training component and an assessment component. From 1 July 2013, all Board-approved supervisors must undertake Board-approved supervisor training every five years to maintain their Board-approved status. One Board-approved master class is the minimum training required.

**National Law** means the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory of Australia and as amended from time to time.

**Principal supervisor** means a supervisor who has been approved by the Board to supervise provisional psychologists or registrars, and to be responsible for the training undertaken in that program.

**Provisional psychologist** means a person registered as a provisional psychologist under section 62 of the National Law.

**Psychologist** means a person who holds general registration as a psychologist under section 52 of the National Law.

**Registrar program** means a Board-approved supervised practice program for the purpose of gaining an area of practice endorsement with a Board-approved supervisor.

**Secondary supervisor** means a supervisor who has had at least two years of experience practising as a generally registered psychologist and has completed a Board-approved training program in psychology supervision before applying to act as a Board-approved supervisor. The secondary supervisor fulfils a component of the supervision of the internship program as agreed with the Board, the principal supervisor and the provisional psychologist, and is responsible to the principal supervisor.

**Supervised practice program** is a Board-approved training and supervision plan, which consists of supervised psychological work and professional development activities designed to enable a provisional psychologist who has completed an accredited four-year or five-year sequence of study to develop the psychological capabilities required for general registration.

**Supervisee** refers to a registered provisional psychologist undertaking the 4+2 or 5+1 internship program, or a general psychologist undertaking the registrar program, as outlined in the relevant guidelines, or a provisional or general psychologist undertaking an accredited higher degree.

**Supervisor** refers to a registered general psychologist approved by the Board to act as a principal or secondary supervisor.

## Attachments

Attachment A: Extract of relevant sections from the National Law

Attachment B: Supervision of provisional psychologists before national registration

Date of issue:	30 April 2013
Date of review:	These guidelines will be reviewed three years from the date of issue.

## Attachment A – Extract of relevant sections from the National Law<sup>4</sup>

### 12 Approval of registration standards

- (1) *The Ministerial Council may approve a registration standard about—*
- (a) *the registration, or renewal of registration, of persons in a health profession; or*
  - (b) *the endorsement, or renewal of the endorsement, of the registration of registered health practitioners.*

### 35 Functions of National Boards

- (1) *The functions of a National Board established for a health profession are as follows—*
- (a) *to register suitably qualified and competent persons in the health profession and, if necessary, to impose conditions on the registration of persons in the profession;*
  - (b) *to decide the requirements for registration or endorsement of registration in the health profession, including the arrangements for supervised practice in the profession;*

### 39 Codes and guidelines

*A National Board may develop and approve codes and guidelines—*

- (a) *to provide guidance to the health practitioners it registers; and*
- (b) *about other matters relevant to the exercise of its functions.*

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<sup>4</sup> The Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory of Australia and as amended from time to time.

## Attachment B – Supervision of provisional psychologists before national registration

### **Supervision of provisional psychologists undertaking the internship program (4+2 pathway):**

- In New South Wales, Tasmania and Queensland, psychologists providing supervision of provisional or probationary psychologists to meet the requirements for full registration were required to complete a state board-endorsed supervision training workshop, and to successfully pass the assessment component of the training.
- Victoria and Western Australia required completion of relevant training and professional development in supervision and/or adult learning principles.
- South Australia required supervisors to have postgraduate qualifications in psychology.
- The Northern Territory required eligible supervisors to have held full registration for a specific period.
- The ACT required supervisors to have held full registration for four years.

### **Supervision of provisional psychologists to meet the requirements for full registration via an accredited higher degree program:**

- Supervisor psychologists were required to be registered, eligible for membership of the relevant Australian Psychological Society (APS) College and have at least two years' full-time relevant experience. For example, if supervising in an Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC) accredited counselling masters program, the supervisor needed to be a member, or eligible to be a member of the APS Counselling College. (See APAC Standards (2010) Standard 5.1.3).
- Training in supervision was not specified, except in Queensland.

In all states and territories, supervision was considered to be part of psychological practice, so supervisors fell under the respective state and professional codes of conduct and ethics that required psychologists to practise within their competencies.