



The Society for Industrial and Organisational Psychology Australia  
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The Society for Industrial and Organisational Psychology Australia (SIOPA) appreciates the opportunity to comment on The Psychology Board of Australia (the Board) consultation paper on the review of the National psychology examination curriculum (National examination).

## About SIOPA

The Psychology Board of Australia provides endorsement across nine (9) areas of expertise in psychology – Clinical Neuropsychology, Clinical Psychology, Community Psychology, Counselling Psychology, Educational and Developmental Psychology, Forensic Psychology, Health Psychology, Organisational Psychology, and Sport Psychology. SIOPA represents Organisational Psychologists and practitioners working in the expert field of Organisational Psychology.

Founded in November 2016, SIOPA is an independent and incorporated association with a purpose to create growth, supervision and professional development opportunities for Organisational Psychologists and related disciplines in Australia. Our practices, methods and principles have been derived and supported by US-based SIOP, and are tailored to suit the renewed challenges that present our profession moving into the future in Australia.

## Focus and Format of Submission

SIOPA's submission to this review will focus on the Organisational Psychology profession. This submission will address the key areas for review in relation to registration of professional and competent psychologists in the expertise area of Organisational Psychology:

- assesses the right competencies for general registration as a psychologist in Australia
- remains fit-for-purpose
- is aligned with the newly published *International declaration of core competencies in professional psychology*(2016), and
- that the curriculum is up-to-date with advances in the field of psychology.

SIOPA's recommendations are listed below followed by our full submission.

## Recommendations

### Recommendation 1

National examinations provide an assessment of general knowledge for the Psychology profession. Retain the National Examination for graduates who complete

the 4+2 pathway to registration as they do not receive extensive training and supervision compared to other pathways to registration.

### Recommendation 2

National examinations should not be required for graduates who complete Masters or Doctoral Psychology training programs as a pathway to registration. The requirement to complete the National examination in addition to the extensive training and supervision they have already completed is burdensome and unnecessary. Graduates have already demonstrated their competence through extensive assessments and supervised practice.

### Recommendation 3

The National Examination is re-designed to be an assessment of the core competencies of all disciplines in which an entry level psychologist could work and apply psychological principles, including Community Psychology, Educational and Developmental Psychology, Forensic Psychology, Health Psychology, Organisational Psychology, and Sport Psychology, and not focused predominantly on Counselling and Clinical Psychology competencies (the current design).

## **Submission**

### **Fit for Purpose**

The provision of specialist knowledge, skills and abilities provided within Masters and Doctoral Psychology training programs, ensures graduates obtain the specialist competencies required for the safe, effective and efficient practice within their area of expertise (i.e. the 9 specialist areas). Academic and Board-Approved Supervisors provide input into the assessment and development of each graduate using the current professional competencies as a framework, across a variety of settings. Board-Approved Supervisors are required to have participated in Supervisor's training as accredited by the Psychology Board of Australia . This process ensures that graduates of the postgraduate training programs are work ready upon employment.

The requirement to complete the National examination in addition to the extensive training and supervision they have already completed is burdensome and unnecessary. Graduates have already demonstrated their competence through extensive assessments and supervised practice. Therefore the National Examination for Masters and Doctoral Psychology trained graduates is not fit for purpose.

Currently Masters and Doctoral Psychology training graduates have an exemption from the National Exam until 1 July 2019 though the Psychology Board of Australia

states it will review this as that date approaches. **We strongly recommend graduates who complete a Masters or Doctoral Psychology training programs as a pathway to registration should not be required to complete a National Examination.**

Graduates who complete professional Psychology training through the 4+2 pathway do not receive specialist knowledge, skills, and abilities and do not participate in supervised practice during the professional training program. It is questionable whether a National Examination presented in multiple choice format is able to assess an individual's demonstrated knowledge, skills and abilities. It is more likely the examination is an assessment of their knowledge obtained through study rather than an assessment of demonstrated practical application and development of skills and abilities. Nonetheless, **as long as the 4 + 2 pathway is an approved pathway to obtain general registration, then an assessment for competency is required.**

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#### **Assess the right competencies and aligns with the newly published International declaration of core competencies in professional psychology (2016).**

A review of the newly published *International declaration of core competencies in professional psychology* (2016) reveals the core competencies of professional psychology (pg.11-14) were developed for entry level psychologists and intended to be generic and apply to all disciplines of Psychology (i.e. Clinical Neuropsychology, Clinical Psychology, Community Psychology, Counselling Psychology, Educational and Developmental Psychology, Forensic Psychology, Health Psychology, Organisational Psychology, and Sport Psychology).

"The core competences presented in this Declaration are those expected of all psychologists providing services to clients at the time of entry to the profession. It is

recognized and acknowledged that while these core competences serve as the basis for entry to the profession, the practising psychologist is expected to maintain continuing competence as the profession changes and practice evolves.”<sup>1</sup>

The Terms and Definitions of the *International declaration of core competencies in professional psychology* (2016), does not refer to Psychologists as predominantly providing counselling or clinical services. For example, refer to definitions extracted below:

**“Psychologist:** A professional practitioner who is competent to carry out assessment and intervention related to psychological and behavioural variables, in order to improve the well-being or performance of individuals, groups, communities, organizations, systems, or society.

**Psychological assessment:** A systematic process that uses a combination of techniques and methods (such as tests, inventories, interview, observation) in order to evaluate various psychological and behavioural characteristics (e.g., traits, capabilities) of an individual or group of individuals.

**Psychological evaluation:** A systematic evaluation (see also Evaluation) of constructs (see also Constructs) which are psychological in nature.

**Psychological intervention:** An intervention (see also Intervention) developed through psychological methods and based on psychological theories or models in order to facilitate change in an individual, group, community, organization, system, or society.”<sup>2</sup>

Therefore, **the National Examination is not fit for purpose as it is predominantly assessing Counselling and Clinical Psychology core competencies and not generic core competencies an entry level psychologist, who may work in one or more disciplines of psychology upon commencing employment, would be required to demonstrate.**

**The National Examination is not aligning with the *International declaration of core competencies in professional psychology* (2016)** as this Declaration does not refer to specific disciplines of psychology such as Counselling or Clinical, but rather notes that psychology can be applied “*individuals, groups, communities, organizations, systems, or society*”<sup>3</sup>. If the National Examination were aligning with the core competencies outlined in the Declaration, then the questions would be focussed on all disciplines in which an entry level psychologist could work and apply psychological principles, including Community Psychology, Educational and Developmental Psychology, Forensic Psychology, Health Psychology, Organisational Psychology, and Sport Psychology.

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<sup>1</sup> [International declaration of core competencies in professional psychology \(2016\)](#) Pg. 9

<sup>2</sup> [International declaration of core competencies in professional psychology \(2016\)](#) Pg. 7

<sup>3</sup> [International declaration of core competencies in professional psychology \(2016\)](#) Pg. 7

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END OF SUBMISSION