# Guidelines for the 5+1 internship program

**December 2025**

For provisional psychologists and supervisors

Psychology Board of Australia
Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

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Ahpra and the National Boards regulate these registered health professions: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practice, Chinese medicine, chiropractic, dental, medical, medical radiation practice, midwifery, nursing, occupational therapy, optometry, osteopathy, paramedicine, pharmacy, physiotherapy, podiatry and psychology.

# Contents


1. Introduction ..... 3
   1.1 Overview ..... 3
   1.2 Purpose ..... 3
2. Developing understanding of the professional competencies in the internship ..... 3
   2.1 The threshold professional competencies ..... 3
3. Entry into the 5+1 internship ..... 4
   3.1 Australian (domestic) applicants ..... 4
      *3.1.1. Complete a fifth-year Board-approved qualification ..... 4*
      *3.1.2. Applying for entry into the 5+1 internship program ..... 4*
      *3.1.3. Substantial break in practice ..... 4*
   3.2 International applicants ..... 4
   3.3 The internship program plan ..... 4
      *3.3.1. Revising the internship plan ..... 5*
   3.4 Requirements during the 5+1 internship ..... 5
   3.5 Required reporting ..... 6
      *3.5.1. Logbook ..... 7*
      *3.5.2. Progress review ..... 7*
      *3.5.3. Final assessment of competence report ..... 7*
   3.6 National Psychology Examination ..... 7
   3.7 Timeframes for completion of the 5+1 internship ..... 8
   3.8 Arranging an internship ..... 8
4. Psychological practice for the 5+1 internship ..... 9
   4.1 Client contact ..... 9
      *4.1.1. Client contact in the 5+1 internship ..... 9*
      *4.1.2. Client-related activities in the 5+1 internship ..... 9*
      *4.1.3. Simulated client contact ..... 9*
   4.2 Work roles ..... 10
5. Supervision ..... 11
   5.4 Supervision provided during the 5+1 internship ..... 12
      *5.4.1. Individual supervision ..... 12*
      *5.4.2. Direct observation ..... 12*
      *5.4.3. Other types of supervision ..... 13*
      *5.4.4. Cultural supervision ..... 13*
      *5.4.5. Responsibilities of the principal and secondary supervisors ..... 13*
      *5.4.6. Offsite supervisory arrangements ..... 13*
6. Changes and disruptions in supervisory arrangements ..... 14
   6.1 Availability of supervisor(s) ..... 14
   6.2 Changes in supervisory arrangements ..... 14
      *6.2.1. Change of principal supervisor ..... 14*

*6.2.2. The internship plan under a new principal supervisor* ..... *14*
*6.2.3. Change of secondary supervisor* ..... *14*
6.3 Discontinuing the internship ..... 14
6.4 Recommencing the internship ..... 14
*6.4.1. Annual renewal* ..... *15*
6.6 Use of title ..... 15
6.7 Psychological practice outside the 5+1 internship ..... 15
6.8 Professional indemnity insurance ..... 15
**7. Leave arrangements and the 5+1 internship ..... 16**
7.1 Leave ..... 16
*7.1.1. Annual leave* ..... *16*
*7.1.2. Extended leave* ..... *16*
**8. Standards and policies governing the internship ..... 16**
8.1 Standards, guidelines and policies governing the internship ..... 16
8.2 Code of conduct ..... 16
**9. Completion of the internship ..... 17**
9.1 Applying for general registration ..... 17
**Appendix A: Supporting documents ..... 18**
**Appendix B: Definitions ..... 20**

# 1. Introduction

The Psychology Board of Australia (the Board) has developed these Guidelines for the 5+1 internship (the guidelines) in accordance with section 39 of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

The requirements for general registration as a psychologist in Australia are set out in the General registration standard. They include a requirement to complete a six-year sequence of education and training. There are two pathways to general registration: the 5+1 internship pathway and the higher degree pathway. The 5+1 internship pathway involves:

1. completing a five-year sequence of study in psychology (e.g. a bachelor's degree followed by a Master of Professional Psychology),
2. successful completion of a Board-approved 5+1 internship program, and
3. passing the national psychology exam.

The Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC) is the accreditation authority responsible for accrediting education providers and programs of study for the psychology profession. The first to fifth years of study in psychology are based on APAC accreditation standards. The 5+1 internship is an intensive supervised training program that enables provisional psychologists to develop the threshold professional competencies (the professional competencies) set by the Board that are required to gain general registration. These guidelines outline the professional competencies for the internship year.

## 1.1 Overview

The 5+1 internship program is a one-year full time (or full-time equivalent) period of supervised practice. During the internship, provisional psychologists will consolidate the skills and knowledge developed during their Board-approved program of study and apply these in a practical, supervised setting. The internship involves three key components:

- psychological practice, carried out in an approved work role,
- supervision by a Board-approved supervisor (one principal supervisor and one or more secondary supervisors), and
- education and training activities that include active training, designed to enhance learning.

## 1.2 Purpose

The purpose of the internship is to ensure that provisional psychologists are suitably trained and qualified to practice psychology in a competent, safe and ethical manner. It is an intensive supervised training program that aims to develop and demonstrate the professional competencies required for general registration.

# 2. Developing understanding of the professional competencies in the internship

## 2.1 The threshold professional competencies

The Board has adopted a national competency-based framework across the registration standards, codes and guidelines.

The professional competencies are the basis of registration requirements for safe practice. At the completion of the 5+1 internship, when applying for general registration, an applicant must demonstrate that they meet the eight threshold professional competencies as outlined in the Professional competencies for psychologists.

The professional competencies articulate the minimum knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviours, values, and other attributes required to allow an individual to practice safely and effectively as a psychologist.

The 5+1 internship focuses on ensuring provisional psychologists can demonstrate the professional competencies common to all areas of professional psychology.

# 3. Entry into the 5+1 internship

## 3.1 Australian (domestic) applicants

### *3.1.1. Complete a fifth-year Board-approved qualification*

The Board accepts the fifth-year qualification to have been completed on receipt of an official academic transcript or letter from the Head of School that confirms successful completion of all required competencies and an eligibility to graduate.

### *3.1.2. Applying for entry into the 5+1 internship program*

To enter the 5+1 internship year, applicants are required to:

- hold provisional registration
- submit an internship program plan (INPP-76) with Ahpra for approval
    - this must include details of the applicant's Board-approved supervisor (BAS) and relevant work role.
- meet the Board's mandatory registration standards, including:
    - Registration standard: Professional indemnity insurance arrangements.
    - Registration standard: Recency of practice

Ahpra will assess the internship program plan and only approve it once the degree has been completed. Provisional psychologists can start their internship immediately after lodging the plan. The provisional psychologist can begin to accrue client contact hours through simulated client contact[1] and, once the supervisor assesses they are ready, through direct client contact.

### *3.1.3. Substantial break in practice*

To commence the internship after having a substantial break in practice following completion of their fifth-year postgraduate study, applicants must refer to the Board's Recency of Practice policy.

## 3.2 International applicants

International applicants applying to commence the 5+1 internship program must have had their qualifications assessed by the Board as being substantially equivalent or based on similar competencies to a Board-approved fifth year qualification.

For further information, refer to Ahpra's webpage for overseas applicants.

## 3.3 The internship program plan

The internship program plan (INPP-76) is an agreement between the supervisor(s), the provisional psychologist, and the Board. It is a formal arrangement or contract and is required to be detailed, individualised and ensure the provisional psychologist can achieve the required threshold competencies to be eligible for general registration. It outlines three key components:

1. How the proposed psychological practice will enable the provisional psychologist to achieve the professional competencies required for general registration.
2. How, and in what ways, the supervisor(s) will contribute to the provisional psychologist's learning process.
3. Proposed education and training activities that the supervisor(s) consider appropriate.

On receipt of a proposed internship plan, Ahpra will review and assess:

- whether the provisional psychologist is likely to be able to achieve the professional competencies given the nature of the proposed work role(s)

[1] Simulated client contact provides the experience of problem-based learning with simulated clients. It can include role play with students or peers, shadowing senior psychologists, simulated online client interactions, and reflection. It allows provisional psychologists to develop clinical reasoning and communication skills in a realistic but controlled learning environment, overseen by the supervisor. Simulation allows the provisional psychologist to experience dealing with feelings and emotions simulated by clinical and professional scenarios, while not putting real clients at risk.

- if any internship requirements are unlikely to be met within the work role, and whether adequate alternate ways of meeting these requirements have been identified
- how much psychological practice versus non-psychological practice is involved in the work role(s).

Ahpra will request further information for internship plans that do not initially meet assessment criteria.

#### *3.3.1. Revising the internship plan*

If either the principal supervisor or the provisional psychologist identifies that the internship plan requires significant amendment to enable the provisional psychologist to meet the requirements of the 5+1 internship, a revised internship plan must be submitted to Ahpra. The provisional psychologist can begin to accrue hours from the date the principal supervisor has signed the revised plan.

### 3.4 Requirements during the 5+1 internship

Table 1 shows the internship requirements that must be met across the three components of the 5+1 internship.

**Table 1: Requirements of the 5+1 internship year**

| 5+1 internship component | Total hours required | Minimum requirement (of total hours required) |
|---|---|---|
| **Psychological practice** (includes supervision and education and training hours) | **1,500 hours** | **Client contact hours must be a minimum of 500 hours**<br>Up to 60 of the 500 hours of client contact can be simulated learning.<br>Client-related activities may include reading and researching to assist problem formulation and diagnosis, case consultation with colleagues, formal and informal reporting, and scoring assessments.<br>The supervisor provides guidance on what client-related activities are relevant, considering the provisional psychologist's development needs and their specific work role context.<br>Refer to Appendix B for further information about client contact, client-related activities, and psychological practice. |
| **Supervision** | **80 hours** | **Individual supervision (one-on-one)**<br>A minimum of 50 hours of total supervision must be individual supervision with the principal supervisor.<br>80 hours of supervision equates to approximately 1 hour of supervision for every 18 hours of practice. However, the frequency of supervision is determined by the supervisor.<br>For provisional psychologists who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, culturally informed supervision may be counted towards their 80 hours of total supervision.<br>Progress review/s should be undertaken with the principal supervisor every 6 months during the internship. The format of these reviews is determined by the principal supervisor.<br>**Direct observation**<br>The supervisor is to observe at least four sessions every 6 months:<br>• a minimum of two sessions must be psychological assessments, and<br>• a minimum of two must be intervention sessions. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | The supervisor and provisional psychologist are to determine the most effective methods to complete the required supervision and direct observations.<br>Refer to Section 5 for further information on supervision. |
| **Education and training activities** | **Minimum 60 hours** | A minimum 60 hours of education and training activities must be completed during the internship. The principal supervisor will determine the type of education and training opportunities required to meet all professional competencies.<br>This must include demonstrating a health equity and human rights approach when working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and people from diverse groups.<br>Refer to Section 4.3 for further information about education and training. |

### 3.5 Required reporting

Provisional psychologists must undertake regular reporting with their supervisor(s) throughout their internship year through:

1. **A logbook (LBPP-76)**
   - The logbook provides a clear record of all supervised psychological practice, details of education and training and a record of supervision hours. The Board can request submission of the logbook at any time throughout the 5+1 internship year and until general registration has been approved.
2. **Progress review**
   - A progress review should be undertaken every 6 months by the principal supervisor and provisional psychologist. This should form part of the supervisory activities and does not need to be submitted to the Board unless requested.
3. **Final assessment of competence report (PACF-76)**
   - This key document is completed by the supervisor. It is how the Board is assured that the provisional psychologist has achieved the professional competencies for general registration.

See Table 2 below for further guidance of the reporting requirements.

**Table 2: 5+1 Internship – required reporting**

| Report | Who completes it? | When is it completed? | Who is it submitted to? |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Logbook –** LBPP-76<br>*Record of supervised psychological practice, supervision, and education and training activities* | Provisional psychologist and supervisor | Updated each week, detailing:<br>• Psychological practice,<br>• Supervision, and<br>• Education and training activities. | Supervisor(s)<br><br>The Board can request submission of the logbook at any time. |
| **Progress review**<br>*Format determined by supervisor.*<br>*Example template available on the Board's website* | Provisional psychologist and supervisor | Every 6 months, detailing:<br>• Supervisor: evaluation of progress<br>• Provisional psychologist: critical self-reflection on progress | Record kept by provisional psychologist and supervisor<br><br>The Board can request submission of progress reviews at any time. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Final assessment of competence –** PACF-76 | **Principal supervisor:** Evaluation of competence | At the end of the internship, after the National Psychology Exam has been passed. | Ahpra, by principal supervisor |

*3.5.1. Logbook*

The provisional psychologist must maintain a logbook that details activities undertaken during the internship. The logbook provides a mechanism for recording and reporting on the three key components of the internship: psychological practice, education and training activities, and supervision.

The logbook record of professional practice contains three sections:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Section A**<br>Record of Practice | • The provisional psychologist must maintain a daily record of their practice. Details about what information to include are shown on the logbook form. |
| **Section B**<br>Record of education and training activities | • Provisional psychologists must maintain a record of relevant education and training activities undertaken.<br>• In addition to maintaining a record, they must keep a portfolio of evidence of participation or documentation of the activity (e.g., receipt or certificate of attendance).<br>• Provisional psychologists should also provide evidence of reflection of how the activities will be integrated into their practice to improve overall effectiveness. |
| **Section C**<br>Record of Supervision | • Provisional psychologists must provide a summary of the content of each supervision session.<br>• The record of supervision must also include supervisor feedback and evaluative comments. |

Failure to maintain an accurate logbook may result in the Board not recognising a period of supervised practice and/or initiating an investigation into the professional conduct of the provisional psychologist and the supervisor.

The logbook must be reviewed regularly (e.g. weekly, or fortnightly if part-time), by the supervisor(s). If Ahpra requests the logbook, it must be submitted to Ahpra within 14 days of the request.

*3.5.2. Progress review*

It is considered good practice to review the provisional psychologist's progress towards developing professional competencies. This should occur at least once every 6 months during the internship.

The format of these reviews is determined by the principal supervisor.

The Board does not require submission of these reports; however they will need to be made available to the Board on request.

*3.5.3. Final assessment of competence report*

At the end of the 5+1 internship, the principal supervisor must complete and submit a final assessment of competence form (PACF-76). Completing the form certifies that the provisional psychologist has acquired proficiency in the professional competencies to practice safely, ethically, and effectively.

## 3.6 National Psychology Examination

Provisional psychologists completing the 5+1 internship pathway must successfully pass the National Psychology Examination (the exam) before applying for general registration. The exam is designed to test the threshold professional competencies for general registration as a psychologist in Australia.

The exam is required for provisional psychologists with training in pathways that contain non-accredited components.

The one year of internship within the 5+1 internship pathway is non-accredited in that it is not regulated under the accreditation standards. Internships are conducted within the industry sector, not the education sector, and are approved by the Board.

Guidelines for the National Psychology Examination are available on the Board's website.

### 3.7 Timeframes for completion of the 5+1 internship

The internship is designed to be completed in one year (if working full time), allowing for holidays and leave. The minimum time for completing the 5+1 internship is 44 weeks full time. However, in line with the provisional psychologists' responsibility to monitor and manage their wellbeing and self-care, leave periods are encouraged.

Ensuring fair and equitable policies and processes for provisional psychologists taking parental leave, sick leave, carer's leave, or lifestyle leave is important to the Board. For further information on extended leave periods, refer to the Board's Extended Leave Provisions for Provisional Psychologists fact sheet.

While there is no maximum timeframe for completion, applicants must meet the requirements of the Recency of Practice standard.

### 3.8 Arranging an internship

It is a requirement that the provisional psychologist's proposed work role is approved by Ahpra prior to commencing client contact.

Table 3 below details the steps to follow when arranging a 5+1 internship.

**Table 3: Arranging a 5+1 internship**

| Step | Description |
|---|---|
| 1. Find a work role(s) of a psychological nature | Find a work role that allows for the achievement of the professional competencies and meets the other requirements of the 5+1 internship.<br><br>A single work role may be permitted if it covers a broad range of experience, or the internship may require two or more work roles. |
| 2. Find a principal supervisor | Enter into a supervisory arrangement with a Board Approved Supervisor (BAS). |
| 3. Find a secondary supervisor | Enter into a secondary supervisory arrangement with a BAS.<br><br>The principal supervisor may assist the provisional psychologist to identify an appropriate secondary supervisor and must agree to the appointment of the secondary supervisor(s). |
| 4. Develop an internship plan | In conjunction with the principal and secondary supervisor(s), the applicant must develop an internship program plan using form INPP-76. |
| 5. Complete and submit application documents to Ahpra | The provisional psychologist must submit the following to Ahpra:<br><br>• An online application for provisional registration if unregistered,<br>• an internship program plan (INPP-76),<br>• a position description for the proposed work role, from the organisation or agency where the internship will be conducted and signed by the workplace manager, and<br>• any other relevant supporting documents. |

| | |
|---|---|
| | The applicant must arrange for the final academic transcript, showing successful completion of the fifth-year qualification, to be sent directly to Ahpra by the issuing educational institution.<br><br>The provisional psychologist must retain a copy of all forms and documents for their own records until they have progressed to general registration. |

# 4. Psychological practice for the 5+1 internship

For the 5+1 internship, psychological practice refers to client contact and client related activities. Psychological practice involves the application of psychological knowledge, methodology, principles, techniques and ethical standards to individual clients, groups or organisations[2]. During the 5+1 internship, psychological practice conducted by the provisional psychologist should result in the development of all professional competencies for general registration.

## 4.1 Client contact

### *4.1.1. Client contact in the 5+1 internship*

Client contact means direct contact with clients involving specific tasks of psychological assessment, diagnosis, intervention, prevention, treatment, consultation, and providing advice and strategies under the guidance of the Board approved supervisor.

Clients may be individuals, couples, families, groups of people, organisations, communities, facilitators, sponsors, or those commissioning or paying for the professional activity.

Client contact may include providing psychological advice, strategies, and other direct contact with associated parties of the primary client (such as a parent or teacher of a client who is a minor). This contact may be in person, by videoconference, or telephone.

As advised in Table 1 of these guidelines, direct client contact must total a minimum of 500 hours of internship activities, with the remaining psychological practice being client-related activities, supervision, and education and training activities.

### *4.1.2. Client-related activities in the 5+1 internship*

Client-related activities are activities considered necessary to provide a high standard of service to clients and to support the provisional psychologist's achievement of the professional competencies. These activities may include reading and researching to assist problem formulation and diagnosis, case consultation with colleagues, maintaining client records, formal and informal reporting, as well as scoring assessments.

The supervisor provides guidance on what client-related activities are relevant, taking into account the provisional psychologist's development needs and their unique work role context. The supervisor will also provide guidance on the appropriate level of detail for recording client-related activities in the logbook.

### *4.1.3. Simulated client contact*

Of the 500 hours of client contact, up to 60 hours can be used for skills acquisition, which includes simulated client contact learning activities. These activities allow the provisional psychologist to experience problem-based learning, with simulated clients, without risk to actual clients.

[2] When applied to general registration, the definition of practice is broader, as follows: *Psychological practice involves any role, whether remunerated or not, in which the individual uses their skills and knowledge as a registered psychologist in the profession. Psychological practice is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical care. It also includes using professional knowledge in a direct non-clinical relationship with clients, working in management, administration, education, research, advisory, regulatory or policy development roles, and any other roles that impact on the safe, effective delivery of services in the profession.*

This allows the development of clinical reasoning and communication skills in a realistic, but controlled, learning environment. All simulated learning activities should be followed by review, reflection, and discussion in relation to the professional competencies.

Simulated learning activities may include:

- role play and reflection
- use of student/peer actors
- simulated testing techniques
- computer clients using screen-based/virtual worlds
- videos of real or simulated clients
- shadowing a senior psychologist with a real client
- discussion and treatment planning after the simulation.

The principal supervisor must approve any simulated client contact and determine which activities are appropriate to be counted as client-related activities.

## 4.2 Work roles

### *4.2.1. Scope of the work roles*

Work roles for the 5+1 internship must be psychological in nature, either paid or unpaid.

In accordance with the professional competencies four (4) and five (5) for psychology, provisional psychologists within the internship year should conduct psychological assessments and interventions, with a focus on implementing a range of culturally safe interventions that maximise optimal outcomes for clients. They must involve the psychology-specific tasks of assessment planning, problem formulation, test and intervention selection, diagnosis, intervention, and risk assessment and prevention.

Provisional psychologists may need to undertake more than one work role to gain the broad range of experience necessary to achieve the professional competencies. The supervisor is responsible for supporting the provisional psychologist in identifying the scope of the work role and any limitations of proposed work role(s), that might prevent the provisional psychologist from achieving all of the professional competencies within the 5+1 internship timeframe.

The supervisor should also help the provisional psychologist to identify additional opportunities that will enable the broad range of experience required in the 5+1 internship, such as additional work role(s) or education and training activities. A secondary supervisor may be required for an additional work role (see section 5 for details). Ahpra will consider applications for concurrent work roles on application.

### *4.2.2. Work roles not in scope*

Provisional psychologists are not permitted to work independently or establish an independent private practice. This is because the provisional psychologist has not completed their supervised training, and general registration is required for independent practice.

Independent practice is defined as a practice in which a psychologist operates as a sole trader, contractor, or in a business arrangement with other sole traders and receives a fee for services from a client or third party (such as a referring agency). The Board may approve applications to work in a private practice with other psychologists if the role meets the requirements of the internship and there will be sufficient support and supervision for the provisional psychologist.

If an applicant intends to undertake employment in a position that is concerned with providing services unrelated to psychology in another professional field, their proposed 5+1 internship plan will not be accepted.

Work roles such as teaching or tutoring in psychology, supervising other professionals, or working in research positions do not constitute psychological work for the purpose of the 5+1 internship and will not be approved. However, supervised applied psychological research as part of a psychological practice role may be accepted, provided it contributes to achieving the professional competencies and constitutes no more than 200 hours of psychological practice.

### *4.2.3. Changes to work roles*

Requests to approve a new work role, or any substantial amendment to an existing Board-approved work role (such as a change in duties), must be submitted to Ahpra in the form of an amended internship plan. The updated plan must be signed by the supervisor and the provisional psychologist and include a position description for each proposed new role.

The provisional psychologist can begin to accrue hours of supervised practice in a new or substantially amended work role from the date that the supervisor signs the revised plan.

Provisional psychologists intending to undertake a new work role, or who are making amendments to an existing work role, should submit their revised internship plan and the formal position description ideally before the anticipated change in work role, or no later than 28 days after the change in work role.

### 4.3 Education and training activities

Provisional psychologists should undertake 60 hours of education and training activities throughout their internship, ensuring these are aligned with their scope of practice, to assist in developing all professional competencies. The principal supervisor will determine the type of activities required to meet all professional competencies. These competencies include demonstrating a health equity and human rights approach when working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, as well as people from diverse groups.

Education and training activities can include attending lectures, seminars, presentations, workshops, short courses and conferences. They can also include learning by reading (e.g. peer reviewed journal articles or readings to be undertaken for the National Psychology Exam), and other self-directed learning approved by the principal supervisor. Professional societies and/or associations, higher education providers, workplaces and commercial providers may offer appropriate education and training activities, as can colleagues and supervisors.

## 5. Supervision

### 5.1 Definition and purpose of supervision

In the context of the 5+1 internship pathway, supervision is the process of acquired learning between a provisional psychologist and a supervisor. It is an interactive process that provides the provisional psychologist with a professionally stimulating and supportive opportunity for growth.

It is a specific type of professional relationship in which there is supportive direction, facilitative activities, and instructive critique given by the supervisor to help the provisional psychologist to ensure effective and safe care is delivered. Supervision should ensure that a provisional psychologist practices within accepted professional standards, provides evidence-based assessments and interventions, engages in professional reflexivity and does not practice beyond their competence.

Specifically, the supervisor oversees the provisional psychologist's application of procedures and tasks to help them achieve the threshold professional competencies required for general registration as outlined in the professional competencies for psychologists.

Refer to the Guidelines for supervisors and the Guidelines for supervisor training providers for more detailed guidance on supervision.

### 5.2 Supervisors

*5.2.1. Board-approved supervisor*

Supervision of professional practice during the 5+1 internship can only be undertaken by a Board-approved supervisor (BAS).

The supervisor monitors the competence of provisional psychologists undertaking the 5+1 internship, confirming to the Board the individual has achieved the professional competencies and is safe to practice independently. The requirements for supervisors are set out in the Guidelines for supervisors, which recognise the significance of the role that supervisors play in facilitating the ongoing safe practice of psychology.

Supervision provided by someone who does not hold BAS status cannot be counted towards the supervision requirements for the internship.

A searchable list of supervisors who hold BAS status is available on Ahpra's website.

## 5.3 Qualifications/experience of a supervisor

Supervisors need to have developed proficiency in the area(s) of professional practice in which the provisional psychologist is engaged.

Supervision must always be provided within the limits of the supervisor's experience and training, and in accordance with the National Law, registration standards, the 5+1 Guidelines, and the Code of Conduct.

All supervisors must acquire and maintain the six competencies specific to providing supervision. The Board's supervisor competencies are set out in the Guidelines for supervisors.

## 5.4 Supervision provided during the 5+1 internship

These guidelines recognise the skills and knowledge of supervisors and support their responsibility for training of provisional psychologists within the internship pathway.

Decisions about the activities of the internship will be made by the supervisor and provisional psychologist within the limits specified by these guidelines and the requirement to meet all the professional competencies at the completion of the internship.

The supervisor is responsible for managing the development of the provisional psychologist through:

- the types of direct client contact and client-related activities undertaken, and
- the amount and type of education and training activities engaged in.

It is recommended that supervision occur on a weekly basis while the provisionally registered psychologist is practising.

The supervisor may vary the frequency and duration of supervision meetings during the internship according to the needs of the provisional psychologist and practice context, provided there is regular supervision for the entire duration of the program and the overall minimum supervision hours (80 hours) are met.

In line with Table 1, the 80 hours minimum of overall supervision are to include individual supervision and direct observation. Supervision should be tailored to the provisional psychologist, but the supervisor must observe four sessions every 6 months including:

- a minimum of two (2) assessment sessions; and
- a minimum of two (2) intervention sessions

### *5.4.1. Individual supervision*

Individual supervision will:

- occur through real-time verbal communication between the provisional psychologist and the supervisor, conducted either together in same room or through telephone or videoconference
- include direct observation of the provisional psychologist's practice with clients
- be provided frequently throughout the internship when practicing (excluding leave periods), regardless of the number of hours per week of psychological practice completed.

The supervisor and provisional psychologist will determine the most effective methods to complete the required supervision.

### *5.4.2. Direct observation*

Direct observation refers to a supervisor observing the provisional psychologist's practice with clients. Direct observation may occur live, or via audiovisual recording.

The supervisor and the provisional psychologist must be aware of ethical issues when undertaking observation of practice with clients, including demonstration of culturally safe practice, informed consent, maintaining the integrity of the therapeutic relationship, privacy, and confidentiality.

When the principal supervisor is unable to perform direct observation in an approved workplace setting, a secondary supervisor may fulfil this obligation.

### *5.4.3. Other types of supervision*

These guidelines state that all provisional psychologists undertaking the 5+1 internship must receive at least 50 hours of individual supervision with the principal supervisor(s). Up to 30 hours of the required 80 hours of supervision may be other kinds of supervision, such as group supervision or individual supervision with the secondary supervisor(s).

### *5.4.4. Cultural supervision*

Provisional psychologists who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander may wish to include culturally informed supervision as part of their supervision plan. This may include cultural mentoring and/or cultural supervision, or supervision with an Indigenous psychologist. This type of supervision must be provided by a Board-approved supervisor.

These hours will be counted toward the minimum 80 hours of supervision.

### *5.4.5. Responsibilities of the principal and secondary supervisors*

The principal supervisor is responsible for overseeing the practice of the provisional psychologist and is expected to complete the final assessment of competence report (refer to Table 2 for further detail). The principal supervisor is responsible for ensuring the provisional psychologist receives training and support in the development of all eight professional competencies. It is the principal supervisor's responsibility to approve an appropriate secondary supervisor. When a principal supervisor approves a secondary supervisor, they must ensure that the secondary supervisor holds BAS status by checking Ahpra's Find a supervisor resource.

The purpose of the secondary supervisor is to assist the principal supervisor to enhance the provisional psychologist's internship experience, and to fulfill a component of the supervision that the primary supervisor cannot fulfil themselves. This may be due to leave, working offsite, or because the principal supervisor does not work with the specific client group the provisional psychologist needs supervision for. The Board requires the appointment of at least one secondary supervisor.

Secondary supervisors report to the principal supervisor. The agreement between the supervisors, the provisional psychologist and the Board is detailed in the internship program plan prior to commencement of the internship. The secondary supervisor assists by providing training, supervision, and feedback about the progress of the provisional psychologist, as specified in the internship plan.

Some contribution to supervision by professionals in related professions (such as psychiatry, human resources management, social work, and academia) with specific knowledge relevant to the internship may be beneficial. However, this must be recorded in the logbook as education and training or client-related activity as determined by the principal supervisor, not psychological supervision.

### *5.4.6. Offsite supervisory arrangements*

The Board expects that the principal supervisor is onsite at the provisional psychologist's main place of practice. However, an arrangement in which the principal supervisor is offsite will be approved if the Board is satisfied that the provisional psychologist will receive adequate onsite workplace supervision and direction. Approval for such an arrangement is applied for on the internship plan form.

For an offsite supervisory arrangement, the applicant and the principal supervisor should ensure that:

- the provisional psychologist will receive adequate onsite workplace supervision, direction and guidance from a secondary supervisor or another appropriate professional,
- the employer (that is proposing to provide the work role(s) or employment for the applicant) is aware of the requirements of the internship, and
- the arrangement complies with the goals of the internship as well as privacy, confidentiality, and any other relevant workplace and/or employment policies.

If the supervisor is not onsite, there must be someone else on-site (such as another psychologist, line manager or other health professional) who can oversee the provisional psychologist and can be consulted upon for professional guidance, if needed. This arrangement is to be documented in the internship plan.

# 6. Changes and disruptions in supervisory arrangements

## 6.1 Availability of supervisor(s)

If the principal supervisor is temporarily unavailable (e.g., they are on holidays or on sick leave), the provisional psychologist may continue to practice under the secondary supervisor during that time.

Where both the principal supervisor and secondary supervisor are unavailable at the same time, the provisional psychologist must stop practising immediately and notify the Board in writing within seven days of the end of the existing supervisory arrangement.

## 6.2 Changes in supervisory arrangements

### *6.2.1. Change of principal supervisor*

A provisional psychologist may need to change their principal supervisor during their internship. When there is a change of principal supervisor, the provisional psychologist and principal supervisor must complete and submit a *Change of principal supervisor* form (CHPS-76) to Ahpra for approval within 28 days of the cessation of the supervisory arrangement.

The outgoing principal supervisor must provide details of all supervision to date through the CHPS-76 form (within 14 days of the end of the supervisory arrangement), to provide adequate opportunity for independent comment if the two parties disagree on any aspect of the information provided. Both the supervisor and the provisional psychologist must sign the completed CHPS-76 form.

The new principal supervisor must be provided with a copy of the completed CHPS-76 form.

### *6.2.2. The internship plan under a new principal supervisor*

The CHPS-76 form will also advise Ahpra whether the same internship plan will continue with the new principal supervisor. If deemed necessary, the provisional psychologist and the new supervisor can choose to develop a new internship plan.

If a revised internship plan is proposed, the current internship can continue in the interim, provided the new plan (including formal position description) is submitted to Ahpra within 28 days of the change in supervisor(s). If it is not submitted within this timeframe, the Board may not recognise the period of practice until the new plan is lodged.

### *6.2.3. Change of secondary supervisor*

It is the principal supervisor's role to approve a change of secondary supervisor. When a principal supervisor approves a secondary supervisor, they must ensure that the secondary supervisor holds BAS status by checking Ahpra's find a supervisor online search. If a secondary supervisor does not have the appropriate Board approval, the supervision they provide will not be recognised towards the supervision hours for the internship. There is no requirement to advise Ahpra of this change.

## 6.3 Discontinuing the internship

If a provisional psychologist decides to discontinue the internship, they must notify Ahpra in writing of the decision to surrender provisional registration. This should be done no later than 28 days after the internship is discontinued. If the provisional psychologist chooses to resume their training at a later date, they must re-apply for provisional registration.

A CHPS-76 form (detailing progress to date) is required to be submitted when the internship is discontinued. If the provisional psychologist wishes to apply to start a new internship, Ahpra may not recognise the previously supervised practice if this form is not provided.

## 6.4 Recommencing the internship

If an individual has previously discontinued their internship and wishes to recommence their training, they must apply to Ahpra by submitting the following:

- a new online application for provisional registration
- a new internship plan including signed position description(s) (INPP-76), and
- a statement detailing the reason(s) for discontinuation of the previous internship.

In some instances, Ahpra may recognise work undertaken during the previous internship period. Factors that may be considered include:

- the length of the break from the internship
- the reasons for discontinuing the internship
- any registration/notification issues (such as immediate action, suspension)
- progress made towards the professional competencies.

Ahpra will not recognise prior supervised practice if a completed CHPS-76 report for the period was not provided, unless exceptional circumstances apply.

#### *6.4.1. Annual renewal*

Unlike general registration as a psychologist (which is renewed by 30 November each year), provisional registration must be renewed every 12 months from the date of approval.

The Board may refuse an application for renewal of provisional registration if the applicant does not comply with relevant mandatory registration standards, including:

- any requirements of the National Law
- the Provisional registration standard
- the Professional indemnity insurance arrangements registration standard, and/or
- these guidelines, without reasonable justification.

### 6.5 Applying for provisional registration after three years

Provisional registration may be renewed twice if required (see section 64(3) of the National Law) but cannot be held for more than three years unless a new application is made.

Individuals requiring more than three years to complete their internship must complete an online application for provisional registration at least 60 days before the end of their third year of registration to ensure that they can continue to practice without interruption. A new internship plan does not need to be submitted unless changes are made to the previously approved plan.

Ahpra will send a reminder email, but it is the provisional psychologist's responsibility to submit a new application on time.

### 6.6 Use of title

Provisionally registered psychologists undertaking a 5+1 internship should use the title 'provisional psychologist'.

Provisional psychologists must not use the title 'psychologist' or 'registered psychologist' or any other title that may indicate that they hold either general registration or an area of practice endorsement.

Provisional psychologists may use the alternative title of 'intern'. For further information about titles, see the Board's Guidelines for advertising.

### 6.7 Psychological practice outside the 5+1 internship

A provisional psychologist undertaking the fifth-year qualification component of the 5+1 internship may undertake additional placements outside their university-approved placements – refer to the Policy on working in addition to placements. Additional placements undertaken in fifth year will not be credited towards the requirements of the 5+1 internship.

Provisional psychologists commencing the 5+1 internship pathway may continue to work in addition to their university placements, while finalising their 5+1 internship program plan, for up to 28 days after completion of the fifth-year degree. Once the internship program plan has been signed by the supervisor, they can begin accruing client contact hours for the 5+1 internship through simulated client contact and, once the supervisor assesses they are ready, through direct client contact.

### 6.8 Professional indemnity insurance

While undertaking the 5+1 internship, provisional psychologists must hold professional indemnity insurance that meets the requirements of the Professional indemnity insurance arrangements registration standard.

# 7. Leave arrangements and the 5+1 internship

## 7.1 Leave

Provisional psychologists may take annual and/or extended leave during their internship, subject to the conditions of these guidelines and advised below.

### *7.1.1. Annual leave*

Up to eight weeks of annual and/or personal leave per year of the internship has been allowed for.

The Board does not need to be notified when up to eight weeks of annual/personal leave is taken.

Any proposed leave periods that are longer than eight weeks, taken in one year, is considered extended leave and must be approved in advance by Ahpra.

### *7.1.2. Extended leave*

Extended leave may be granted for a period of up to 12 months (with the possibility of extension), in exceptional circumstances. If a provisional psychologist requires extended leave from supervision longer than eight weeks and up to 12 months, they must seek approval from Ahpra in advance, in writing. If approval is granted, they can recommence the current internship after the period of leave without penalty.

Please refer to the extended leave provisions for provisional psychologists on Ahpra's website.

However, if a provisional psychologist's extended leave from supervision is longer than 12 months, they are required to discontinue the internship and apply for recognition of prior supervised practice when starting a new internship at a later time. Ahpra may decide not to recognise all or part of the previously completed supervised practice. Ahpra will consider factors such as the length of the extended leave, the reasons for the leave, and the degree of contact with the profession in that time, including any self-directed learning or education and training activities undertaken.

Information on requirements for recommencing practice after an extended break is also available in the Board's Recency of practice policy.

# 8. Standards and policies governing the internship

## 8.1 Standards, guidelines and policies governing the internship

All provisional psychologists and supervisors must be familiar with the obligations of registered health practitioners under the National Law and must practice in accordance with the Board's standards, guidelines and policies including:

- *General registration standard*
- *Provisional registration standard*
- *Professional indemnity insurance arrangements registration standard*
- *Recency of practice registration standard*
- *Guidelines for advertising*
- *Guidelines for mandatory notifications*
- *Guidelines for supervisors*
- *Guidelines for supervisor training providers*
- *Guidelines for the National Psychology Examination*
- *Extended leave provisions for provisional psychologists*

All standards, guidelines and policies are available on the Board's Guidelines and policy resource hub.

## 8.2 Code of conduct

5+1 internships are governed by the Code of conduct (the code) and provisional psychologists must act in accordance with the code at all times to ensure safe psychological practice and protection of the public. The code outlines ethical principles and sets the standards and expectations to guide

psychologists (including provisional psychologists) in understanding and implementing what is considered ethical professional conduct.

# 9. Completion of the internship

Once the provisional psychologist has completed their 5+1 internship and passed the National Psychology Exam, they are able to apply for general registration. Ahpra will not consider an application for general registration until the minimum internship period of 44 weeks has been completed.

## 9.1 Applying for general registration

To apply for general registration, the provisional psychologist must submit to the Board an online application for general registration, including the submission of a *Final assessment of competence form* (PACF-76).

If the Board deems that the above requirements have been met, the provisional psychologist will be granted general registration.

If the Board deems that the above requirements have not been met, the provisional psychologist may be required to undertake a further period of internship to be eligible for general registration.

### Review

This policy takes effect from 1 December 2025. The Board will review this policy at least every 5 years.

This policy replaces the previously published policy from December 2013.

## Appendix A: Supporting documents

This list below provides information on the supporting forms for the 5+1 internship program that are used for applications as well as recording and reporting on the internship. Please refer to the online applications on Ahpra's website.

| Document/form | Purpose of document/form | When is it submitted to Ahpra? |
|---|---|---|
| Online application for provisional registration; or<br><br>**APRO-76**<br>Application for provisional registration | To make an application for provisional registration. | Earliest: Up to six weeks before completion of a fourth-year degree if offered a place in a fifth-year degree program.<br>Latest: Provisional registration must be applied for and granted before commencing the fifth-year degree. |
| | To make an application for provisional registration.<br><br>APRO-76 can be used as an alternative to (or if ineligible to use) online graduate applications. | After enrolling in the accredited fifth-year qualification, at the beginning of the fifth year. Note that evidence of enrolment is required. |
| Online application for provisional registration after three years of provisional registration; or<br><br>**ARPP-76**<br>Application for provisional registration after three years of provisional registration | For current provisional psychologists who have already renewed registration twice and now must reapply for registration in accordance with section 64(3) of the National Law. | Before the end of the third year of provisional registration. |
| **INPP-76**<br>Internship program plan form | 1. To develop and record the internship plan with supervisor/s and apply to the Board for assessment and approval of the plan and<br>2. For making significant changes to the plan during the internship. | 1. When the fifth-year degree is finished (or nearly finished if using online graduate applications) in order to start the 5+1 internship, and<br>2. When changing to a new work role or adding an additional work role |
| **CHPS-76**<br>Change of principal supervisor or discontinuing the internship | 1. To advise the Board of a change of principal supervisor and gain approval for this change, or<br>2. To notify the Board if discontinuing the internship. | 1. No more than 28 days after changing supervisor, or<br>2. No more than 28 days after the internship is discontinued |
| **PACF-76**<br>Final assessment of competence | For the principal supervisor to report to the Board on the achievement of the threshold professional competencies at the end of the internship program. | When applying for general registration (only after passing the National Psychology Exam). |
| Online application for general registration | Apply for general registration. | When applying for general registration after completion of all internship requirements (see Table 1 of these guidelines). |

| Document/form | Purpose of document/form | When is it submitted to Ahpra? |
|---|---|---|
| **AGEN-76**<br>Application for general registration | | |

## Appendix B: Definitions

The following terms are defined as they are used in these guidelines.

**Accredited sequence of study** means a program of study, comprising one or more qualifications that have been assessed by the accreditation authority for the profession as meeting the requirements of accreditation standards developed and approved under Part 6 of the National Law, and subsequently approved by the Board as providing a qualification for the purposes of registration in the psychology profession.

**Ahpra** means the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency established under section 23 of the National Law.

**Approved qualification** means a qualification obtained by completing an approved program of study which appears on the Board's *List of approved programs.*

**Board** refers to the Psychology Board of Australia established under section 31 of the National Law.

**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 psychologists in accredited higher degree programs, psychologists doing registrar programs leading to an area of practice endorsement, or registered psychologists doing a transitional or re-entry program.

**Client** means a party or parties to a psychological service provided by the provisional psychologist. Clients may be individuals, couples, dyads, families, groups of people, organisations, communities, facilitators, sponsors, or those commissioning or paying for the professional activity.

**Client contact** means the performance of the specific tasks of psychological assessment, diagnosis, intervention, prevention, treatment, consultation, and provision of advice and strategies directly with clients under the guidance of the supervisor.

**Client-related activities** are activities considered necessary to provide a high standard of service to clients and to support the provisional psychologist's achievement of the professional competencies. The supervisor provides guidance on what client-related activities are relevant, considering the individual provisional psychologist's development needs and their unique work role context, and include reading and researching to assist problem formulation and diagnosis, case consultation with colleagues, and formal and informal reporting.

**Cultural safety** is determined by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals, families and communities. Culturally safe practice is the ongoing critical reflection of health practitioner knowledge, skills, attitudes, practising behaviours and power differentials in delivering safe, accessible and responsive healthcare free of racism. The National Scheme's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and cultural safety strategy 2020-2025 explains the role we all share in ensuring client safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in Australia's health system.

**Direct observation** in the context of a supervisor observing a provisional psychologist during an internship means direct, live or recorded, observation of the provisional psychologist's practice with clients. The supervisor watching an audiovisual recording of the provisional psychologist's practice with clients can meet the requirement if there is an image of each of the parties, including a clear view of facial expressions.

**Education and training activities** means any activity by which provisional psychologists maintain, improve, and broaden their knowledge, gain competence, and develop the personal qualities required in their professional practice. These activities within the internship are directed by the supervisor and involves practice-based learning activities focused on the achievement of the professional competencies

**Guidelines** refer to the Psychology Board of Australia's *Guidelines for the 5+1 internship program*, and any subsequent amendments approved by the Board.

**Internship** means a supervised practice program approved by the Board.

**National Law** refers to the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory in Australia.

**Principal supervisor** means a supervisor who has been approved by the Board to supervise provisional psychologists. The principal supervisor is the main supervisor who has overall responsibility for the program, including any secondary supervisors.

**Provisional psychologist** means a person registered as a provisional psychologist under section 62 of the National Law to enable the individual to complete a period of supervised practice that they must complete to become eligible for general registration as a psychologist.

**Psychological practice for the 5+1 internship** is restricted to the provision of client contact and client related activities. Psychological practice involves the application of psychological knowledge, skills, methodology, principles, techniques and ethical standards to individual clients, groups, organisations, or communities.

**Practice (national scheme definition/ for general registration)** means any role, whether remunerated or not, in which the individual uses their skills and knowledge as a registered psychologist in the profession. Psychological practice is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical care. It also includes using professional knowledge in a direct non-clinical relationship with clients, working in management, administration, education, research, advisory, regulatory or policy development roles, and any other roles that impact on the safe, effective delivery of services in the profession.

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

**Secondary supervisor** means a psychologist or other professional who has been approved by the Board to supervise provisional psychologists. The secondary supervisor may fulfil a component of the supervision in the internship as agreed with the principal supervisor and the provisional psychologist and is responsible to the principal supervisor.

**Simulated client contact** provides the experience of problem-based learning with simulated clients. It can include role play with students or peers, shadowing senior psychologists, simulated online client interactions, and reflection. It allows provisional psychologists to develop clinical reasoning and communication skills in a realistic but controlled learning environment, overseen by the supervisor. Simulation allows the provisional psychologist to experience dealing with feelings and emotions simulated by clinical and professional scenarios, while not putting real clients at risk.

**Supervision** is an interactive process between a provisional psychologist and a supervisor. It provides the provisional psychologist with a professionally stimulating and supportive opportunity for growth. Supervision involves a special type of mentoring relationship in which supportive direction, facilitative activities, and instructive critique is given by the supervisors to assist provisional psychologists to achieve their professional goals. In the context of the internship, supervision is defined as real-time verbal communication between the intern and supervisor, conducted either together in the same room or through videoconference or telephone.

**Supervisee** means a person who receives professional advice, support and guidance from a supervisor to develop greater knowledge, improved skills, and a deeper understanding of accountability.

**Threshold professional competencies** is a benchmark that describes the minimum professional knowledge, skills, and other attributes necessary to practice as a registered psychologist in Australia. This is based on the premise that competency can be described on a continuum. The threshold represents the point on the continuum at which the minimum acceptable level of competence is reached to practice safely and effectively as a psychologist.

**Work role** means placements(s) in settings providing an opportunity for the development of psychological practice skills by provisional psychologists under guidance of a supervisor or supervisors with clients and in client related activities relevant to the attainment of competencies.