



PSYCHOLOGISTS BOARD OF QUEENSLAND

File Number: S32 /S37

Policy Topic: “Approved Workplace Practice Settings for the Supervised Practice Program for Probationary Registrants”.

Date of Approval: 21 August 2008

BACKGROUND

Under the *Psychologists Registration Act 2001* (the Act), the Board has a responsibility to protect the public by promoting high standards of practice of the profession by registrants and to ensure that registrants deliver services in a professional, safe and competent way.

The Board has designed a Supervised Practice Program to provide general registrants with probationary conditions (probationary registrants) with a minimum two year period of experience in the practice of the profession, under the supervision of an approved psychologist supervisor.

Prior to commencing the Supervised Practice Program or changing supervisors, applicants for probationary registration and probationary registrants must submit a Supervision Proposal for the approval of the Board. This Supervision Proposal provides the Board with information on how the applicant or probationary registrant intends to meet the requirements of the Supervised Practice Program, including the location and nature of his or her proposed practice of the profession.

On 31 January 2006 the Board approved a policy on “Practice of the profession in a private practice setting: probationary registrants undertaking the Supervised Practice Program”. This policy stated that a probationary registrant may not practice the profession in his or her own private practice in which he or she is the only practitioner. The Board does not consider that this setting provides sufficient professional support for a probationary registrant or sufficient safeguards for the public. This policy also outlined certain limited circumstances under which a probationary registrant could practice the profession in a group private practice setting.

At a meeting on 19 June 2008, the Board reviewed this policy and decided to develop a broader policy to clarify for probationary registrants (and applicants for probationary registration) and supervisors the requirements of an approved professional workplace practice setting for undertaking the professional practice component of the Supervised Practice Program.

The policy outlined below on “Approved Workplace Practice Settings for the Supervised Practice Program for Probationary Registrants” replaces the policy on “Practice of the profession in a private practice setting: probationary registrants undertaking the Supervised Practice Program”. This current policy clarifies the supervision arrangements which a probationary registrant must have in place in order to practice the profession in a particular workplace practice setting.

POLICY

Approved workplace practice settings for the Supervised Practice Program are now categorised from most restrictive to least restrictive in terms of supervisor access. (Note that the nature of approved practice of the profession for the Program is defined in section 3.1 of the *Supervision Guidelines*. Practice of the profession must be psychological in nature and must enable the probationary registrant to meet the Competency requirements of the Program).

For any of the workplace practice settings outlined below if the supervisor or an assistant supervisor is also the probationary registrant's line manager refer to Note 1 page 4.

1. **On-site supervision**

The probationary registrant practises under the on-site supervision of their approved supervisor for the Supervised Practice Program (ie both practise at the same physical location). Requirements of this setting:

- The supervisor must be a current general registrant on the Board's List of Approved Supervisors, (ie accredited as a supervisor by the Board on completion of the Supervisor Training and Accreditation Program (STAP) and approved under section 35 of the *Psychologists Registration Regulation 2002* (the Regulation)).
- The supervisor must be: practising at the same physical location as the probationary registrant; present, where possible, at this location when the probationary registrant is practising there¹; and available for brief consultations as necessary.
- The practice setting and the nature of the practice at this setting must allow opportunities for the supervisor to directly observe² the probationary registrant's practice of the profession.

2. **Off-site supervision**

The probationary registrant practises under the off-site supervision of their approved supervisor for the Supervised Practice Program.

- The supervisor must be a current general registrant on the Board's List of Approved Supervisors, (ie STAP accredited), approved under section 35 of the *Psychologists Registration Regulation 2002* (the Regulation).
- The supervisor may be located external to the probationary registrant's practice setting.
- The supervisor must be available for urgent consultations eg by telephone.
- The practice setting and the nature of the practice at this setting must allow opportunities for the supervisor or an approved assistant supervisor to directly observe² the probationary registrant's practice of the profession.
- An assistant supervisor must be available in accordance with one of the following arrangements:

2(i) The probationary registrant has an assistant supervisor (a general registrant approved under section 37 or 38 of the Regulation) practising on-site (at the same physical location) as the probationary registrant.

- This assistant supervisor must be present, where possible, at this location when the probationary registrant is practising there³ and available for brief consultations as necessary.

¹ Note. It is understood that it may not always be possible for a supervisor, line manager or assistant supervisor to be on site at the practice work place whenever the probationary registrant is practising there, due to unexpected or other absences (eg illness; attending meetings etc). It is preferable if the supervisee can contact the supervisor via telephone regarding urgent matters. However, for planned absences such as recreation leave, the supervisor should appoint an assistant supervisor for the probationary registrant.

² Direct observation may be in person or via videotape (preferred) or audiotape if videotape facilities are not available.

³ Note. It is understood that it may not always be possible for a supervisor, line manager or assistant supervisor to be on site at the practice work place whenever the probationary registrant is practising there, due to unexpected or other absences (eg illness; attending meetings etc). It is preferable if the supervisee can contact the supervisor via telephone regarding urgent matters. However, for planned absences such as recreation leave, the supervisor should appoint an assistant supervisor for the probationary registrant.

- The assistant supervisor must meet the responsibilities of a supervisor or assistant supervisor in accordance with the Act and the Regulation and the *Supervision Guidelines*.

or

- 2.(ii) The probationary registrant has a professional Line Manager practising on-site (at the same physical location) as the probationary registrant. Preferably, the Line Manager will agree, with the Board's approval, to be an assistant supervisor for the probationary registrant, (a general registrant approved under section 37 or 38 of the Regulation or a professional from a cognate discipline approved under section 39 of the Regulation). The responsibilities of the Line Manager include to:
- oversee the professional practice of the probationary registrant
 - be responsible for daily management of client care
 - be responsible for the quality of professional services to clients
 - be present at this location, where possible, when the probationary registrant is practising there¹ and available for brief consultations as necessary
 - provide professional in-service training to the probationary registrant
 - If the Line Manager is approved by the Board as an assistant supervisor the Line Manager must meet the responsibilities of a supervisor or assistant supervisor in accordance with the Act and the Regulation and the *Supervision Guidelines*.

or

- 2(iii) The probationary registrant is working for an organisation within a multidisciplinary team. The probationary registrant does not have a professional Line Manager.
- An experienced professional from a cognate discipline must, with the Board's approval, agree to be an assistant supervisor for the probationary registrant, (approved under section 39 of the Regulation).
 - This assistant supervisor must be present at the practice workplace location¹, where possible, when the probationary registrant is practising there and available for brief consultations as necessary.
 - The assistant supervisor must meet the responsibilities of a supervisor or assistant supervisor in accordance with the Act and the Regulation and the *Supervision Guidelines*.

3. Rural and remote practice locations

Probationary registrants practising in rural and remote locations should, if possible, arrange a workplace setting which meets the requirements of 1 or 2 above. However, this may not be possible. Probationary registrants practising in rural and remote locations require special consideration to ensure that the registrant receives sufficient professional support and supervision to practice the profession in a professional, safe and competent way.

In rural and remote locations the following requirements must be met:

- The supervisor must be a current general registrant on the Board's List of Approved Supervisors, (ie STAP accredited), approved under section 35 of the Regulation.
- The supervisor may be located off-site - external to the probationary registrant's practice setting and in another town or region. The Board approves alternative methods for supervision for probationary registrants located in rural and remote locations (eg teleconference, videoconference etc). (Section 4.3 of the *Supervision Guidelines* provides information on alternative methods of supervision for probationary registrants practising in rural and remote locations).
- The supervisor must be available for urgent consultations eg by telephone or email.
- The practice setting and the nature of the practice at this setting must allow opportunities for the supervisor or an approved assistant supervisor to directly observe²

the probationary registrant's practice of the profession.

- 3(i) If the probationary registrant has a professional Line Manager the following applies:
- The Line Manager does not need to be practising on-site - at the same physical location or in the same town as the probationary registrant. The Line Manager may be located in a regional office.
 - The Line Manager and/or supervisor regularly visits the workplace of the probationary registrant or the probationary registrant regularly travels to the regional base of his or her workplace to meet with the Line Manager or supervisor.
 - The Line Manager is accessible on a daily basis for brief or urgent consultations, either in person or by telephone.
 - Preferably, the Line Manager will agree, with the Board's approval, to be an assistant supervisor for the probationary registrant, (a general registrant approved under section 38 of the Regulation or a professional from a cognate discipline approved under section 39 of the Regulation).
 - The Line Manager: oversees the professional practice of the probationary registrant; is responsible for the quality of professional services to clients; and provides professional in-service training to the probationary registrant.

or

- 3(ii) If the probationary registrant does not have a professional Line Manager or an approved assistant supervisor who could meet the requirements of the Line Manager outlined in 3(i) above the Board will only consider a Supervision Proposal for practice in a rural or remote area if the probationary registrant has partially completed the Supervised Practice Program and met the following minimum requirements:
- Completed 400 hours supervised practice of the profession
 - Completed 20 hours of individual face-to-face supervision
 - Completed the following competency tasks:
 - Competency 2: two tasks completed
 - Competency 3: two tasks completed; at least one task directly observed by a supervisor or assistant supervisor.
 - Competency 6: Completed tasks: 6.2 (Knowledge of the APS Code of Ethics); 6.4 (Independently manages professional affairs); and 6.6 (Record Keeping).

NOTE THE FOLLOWING POINTS

1. **In the case where the Line Manager is the Supervisor or an Assistant Supervisor, a dual role relationship exists.** There is an overriding ethic of the client's care/management having priority. In this case any probationary registrant undertaking supervision with a line manager would have to accept that information about their performance will be revealed, to ensure the welfare/best interest of the client. Solutions to avoid conflict of interest must include setting out the following in a supervision contract agreed to and signed by the Line Manager (supervisor or assistant supervisor) and the probationary registrant: how the dual relationship will be managed; what information will be shared; and arrangements for line performance reviews (eg where possible arrange for review to include another independent professional reviewer if necessary).
2. All Supervision Proposals for Pathway 1 must be accompanied by a Position Description (PD) for the probationary registrant's or applicant's proposed position.
3. The Board will consider a probationary registrant's progress towards completing the Competencies of the Supervised Practice Program as the basis for approving the registrant's progression through to a workplace setting where more flexible arrangements are available, particularly with respect to whether the supervisor is on-site or working within acceptable physical proximity to the probationary registrant.

4. The Board may apply more intensive monitoring measures to probationary registrants practising in workplace settings where supervisor access is limited, (eg three monthly interim Progress Reports; audits of Records of Practice and/or Supervision etc).

