

Preparing for Practice Tip Sheet

Transitioning from provisional registration to general registration

Updated March 2016



This tip sheet is designed for psychology students who are completing an APAC accredited postgraduate (qualifying) course in psychology or interns who are completing their internship.

This preparing for practice tip sheet explains

- When and how to apply for general registration and the pro rata fees.
- Your registration requirements.
- What your continuing professional development requirements (CPD) are.
- How to obtain professional indemnity Insurance (PII).
- How to obtain a Medicare provider number.
- How to enter a registrar program.
- Use of titles.
- How to apply for APS membership.

1. How and when do I apply for general registration?

The Psychology Board of Australia (PsyBA) under the umbrella of the Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency (AHPRA) is responsible for registering psychologists in Australia. general registration with the PsyBA depends on which training pathway. According to the PsyBA's [Policy for higher degree students applying for general registration](#), the time to apply for you have completed:

Internship:	when you have passed the National Psychology Exam
Masters:	when all the coursework and placements have been completed and your thesis has been passed.
Masters/PhD and Doctorate students¹:	when all the coursework and placements have been completed and your "thesis writing has progressed sufficiently as to be equivalent to a Masters thesis in size and scope" [*] . Students that fall in this category need to complete a PDEC-76 form available on the PsyBA website.

The [PDEC-76](#) form is signed by the Head of School to indicate that the applicant has progressed in their APAC-accredited doctoral qualification to the point where they have completed all professional accredited Masters-level coursework and placements, and the thesis writing has progressed sufficiently as to be equivalent to a Masters thesis in size and scope.

^{*} Please note that typically universities will not complete this form for students who are completing a professional doctorate until their thesis has been submitted for marking. Enquire with your university directly about their policy for completing the PDEC-76 form.

2. I've already paid my provisional registration fees, so how much do I need to pay when I apply for general registration?

The PsyBA annually releases a schedule of fees which you can find on the PsyBA website under registration/fees or [click here](#). New applicants for general registration must pay both an application fee and a registration fee. If less than 12 months have passed since you renewed your provisional registration, according to the PsyBA the unused portion of your provisional registration fee will be applied to your general registration².

3. Mandatory Registration Requirements.

The PsyBA sets the registration standards that practitioners must meet in order to register and to practise as psychologists. Once registered, psychologists must continue to meet all of the applicable mandatory registration standards when they renew their annual registration with the PsyBA. There are 8 mandatory registration standards which cover the following topics:

General registration standards	English language skills	Professional indemnity insurance	Area of practice endorsements
Criminal history	Continuing professional development	Recency of practice	Provisional registration

Annually, the PsyBA conducts random audits of psychologist's adherence to these registration standards, so it is important that you understand your obligations. You can read more about these standards at the following places on the both PsyBA ([Registration Standards](#)) and the APS websites ([National Registration Scheme](#))

4. What is continuing professional development (CPD) and what are my obligations once I obtain general registration?

All psychologists who hold general registration are required to complete a minimum of 30 hours of CPD annually in order to retain their general registration. For each annual cycle, all psychologists holding full ('general') registration must:

1. Develop a learning plan to identify their learning needs and goals
2. Complete 30 hours of CPD activities, which includes 10 hours of peer consultation.*
3. Keep a log of all completed CPD activities.
4. Maintain a journal 'reflecting' on all completed CPD activities

All of these requirements must be met for the annual cycle in order for this to be deemed fully compliant with the Psychology Board standard for ongoing general registration. CPD recommended reading links: [APS CPD resources](#) and [PsyBA CPD Resources](#)

**For any area of practice endorsement held, specific CPD activities relevant to the endorsement are required. If you hold 1 area of practice endorsement - 16 hours are required in the relevant area; 2 endorsements - 15 hours are required in each relevant area; or 3 endorsements - 10 hours are required in each relevant area.*

5. How do I obtain Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII)?

All psychologists are required to meet the minimum requirements for PII specified by the PsyBA in their '[Professional indemnity insurance arrangements registration standard](#)'. The PsyBA places the onus on psychologists to ensure that their PII level is appropriate for the size of the practice and the type of service they provide. APS members are offered a comprehensive professional indemnity insurance policy at a considerably reduced premium with the insurance provider [Aon](#). For more information see the PII recommended reading links below.

- APS resource - [Professional Indemnity Insurance Information](#)
- PsyBA resources - [Professional indemnity insurance arrangements registration standard](#), [Guideline on professional indemnity insurance for psychologists](#), and [Professional Indemnity Insurance FAQs](#)

6. How do I obtain a Medicare Provider number?

Psychologists who wish to provide services under Medicare must be registered with Medicare Australia. This involves obtaining a Medicare provider number for each physical location where you will provide psychological services. You can only apply for a Medicare provider number once you have obtained general registration with the PsyBA. [Click here](#) to read more about Medicare and psychology, including how to obtain a Medicare provider number.

7. How I do I obtain an Area of Practice Endorsement?

An area of practice endorsement identifies psychologists who have completed extra training and supervision that is recognised by the PsyBA. According to the PsyBA: *"to be eligible to apply for an area of practice endorsement a psychologist must have advanced training (an accredited qualification in the area of practice followed by a period of supervised practice) over the requirements for general registration."* [Guidelines for an Area of Practice Endorsement](#).

Graduates who have completed an approved APAC postgraduate degree (minimally at the 5th and 6th year level) will be eligible to commence the registrar program in their area of practice. The registrar program consists of three components: (1) Psychological practice, (2) Supervision with a Board approved supervisor, and (3) Active CPD. You can read more about [endorsement](#) and the [registrar program](#), including how to apply, on the [PsyBA](#) website by selecting endorsement from the main menu.

8. How do I apply for APS membership

- Postgraduate pathway:** Once you have completed all the requirements of your degree including the thesis being marked, you are eligible for the Member grade of the APS. Your academic transcript needs to state a date of completion.
- Internship pathway:** Once you have completed all the requirements for the internship, passed the National Psychology Exam and obtained general registration you are eligible to apply for the grade of Member of the APS.

[Click here](#) to apply or upgrade your APS membership.

Contact: Psychology Board of Australia for more information about registration as a psychologist in Australia.

¹ [Policy for higher degree students applying for General registration](#) ² [Fact sheet: Registration as a provisional psychologist for higher degree students](#)