

**Advice on Postgraduate Psychology Placement Supervision Requirements
as circulated to APPA members in May 2021**

This document has been prepared by Dr Chien Hoong Gooi on 30th November 2022.

Background and Information Sources

At the National Psychology Placement Coordinators Network (now APPA) meeting on 7 April 2021, the group posted questions regarding supervision requirements to Psychology Board of Australia (PsyBA) Chair, Rachel Phillips, who was present at the meeting.

After the meeting, PsyBA provided clarifications around internships (4+1, 5+1) and registrar requirements; and the group was also advised by PsyBA to clarify the higher degree supervision requirements with the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC).

The sections below summarise the questions posted to the relevant authorities and the advice received from PsyBA and APAC. Verbatim responses (in blue) from APAC and PsyBA have also been included.

APAC Advice re Higher Degree Programs

1. Are trainees (provisional psychologists) undertaking placements as part of a higher degree program able to count paired supervision as individual supervision? Or should this be considered “group supervision” instead?
 - APAC considers that individual supervision is one student with one supervisor - no one else. This is so a student is comfortable to raise issues without another student being present.

2. In group supervision, is a trainee meant to only record the portion of the supervision time when they are discussing their own practice/clients? For example, with one hour of group supervision attended by 4 trainees, is each trainee meant to log one hour of group supervision or 15 minute of group supervision each? If the latter, can all 4 trainees log and record time in supervision where general discussions have taken place that are NOT related to specific clients (e.g. supervisor discussing generally a particular therapeutic concept)?
 - APAC have consistently accepted counting the full session - so even if the discussion is about someone else’s client it is counted as group supervision and while students may learn about other types of clients and practices, they need individual supervision too.

3. Can trainees count their supervisors’ time spent in reviewing reports and video recordings (in the absence of the trainee) as supervision hours? If so, would this fall under individual supervision hours, group supervision hours or something else?

- Students should be able to be count this as individual supervision - but APAC would be looking at how much of this is part of the placement and would usually only expect a small proportion of supervision time to be spent in this way - students still need to be actually seeing their supervisor as needed for their own learning and support.

PsyBA Advice re Internships (4+2, 5+1) & Registrar Programs

In regards to your question please note the following information:

- Information on group supervision hours in the context of the 4+2 and 5+1 internships and registrar programs are outlined in [Guidelines for the 5+1 internship](#), section 4.1, [Guidelines for the 4+2 internship](#), section 4.1, and [Guidelines on area of practice endorsement](#), section 4.4.
- Each of the guidelines allow “other supervision” and this includes group supervision. Please note that there are limits on the number of hours of ‘other supervision’ (e.g. 30 hours in the 5+1 - this includes the maximum total of all secondary supervision, group supervision and asynchronous individual supervision).
- The internship and registrar guidelines do not allow *peer supervision*.
- The internship and registrar guidelines do not specifically outline how to count group supervision. However, since group supervision is conducted by a Board-approved supervisor (BAS), and is specifically designed as part of a wholistic training program, a trainee can count the entire group supervision time as part of their ‘other supervision’ hours.

When considering this information please also note:

- The number of hours noted in the internship and registrar guidelines are minimum supervision hours, and many trainees seek to receive more supervision than is required for their own learning and support.
- The Board is very clear about the number of hours of ‘other supervision’ that is permitted, and emphasises the importance of individual supervision with a principle supervisor.
- Placements that are undertaken as part of a higher degree program fall under the responsibility of APAC, not the Board.
- The [CPD Guidelines](#) (p.9 PDF version) are very clear on the time that can be counted as *peer* supervision for psychologists who have general registration – i.e. only the time focusing on the practitioner’s own practice.

Brief Summary of Advice

- For all program types, individual supervision is only in the context of one supervisee with one supervisor, and NOT if more than one supervisee is present.

- For all programs, supervisees can count the entire length of the group supervision session – not just the portion they discuss their clients – although there are limits to the amount of group supervision allowed for each program type.
- Asynchronistic supervision (e.g., supervisor reviewing supervisee reports) can be counted as individual supervision for internships (4+1, 5+1) and higher degree programs – NOT registrar program – although there are limits for each program type (specific limits are clearer for internships although less so for higher degrees).