



Aboriginal and Torres Strait  
Islander Health Practice  
Chinese Medicine  
Chiropractic  
Dental  
Medical  
Medical Radiation Practice  
Nursing and Midwifery  
Occupational Therapy  
Optometry  
Osteopathy  
Pharmacy  
Physiotherapy  
Podiatry  
Psychology

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

## Fact Sheet and FAQ for students

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February 2013

### Student registration

#### Background

Australia's national registration and accreditation scheme (the National Scheme) began nationally on 1 July 2010, with the exception of Western Australia which joined the scheme on 18 October 2010. The National Scheme is governed by nationally consistent legislation, the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law as in force in each State and Territory (the National Law). The role of the National Boards under the National Law is to protect the public.

Under the National Law, the National Boards for each of the 14 professions have the power to register students. Student registration commenced on 31 March 2011 for Chiropractic, Dental, Medical, Nursing, Midwifery, Optometry, Osteopathy, Pharmacy, Physiotherapy and Podiatry professions. On 1 July 2012, Chinese Medicine, Medical Radiation practice, Occupational Therapy and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practice professions joined the National Scheme for which student registration also applies.

The Psychology Board of Australia does not register students. Psychology students need to apply for provisional registration. Psychology students wishing to apply for provisional registration must do so either at the beginning of:

- a) the 4+2 internship program; or
- b) their higher degree pathway.

#### Getting registered

Individual students do **not** need to do anything to register with their National Board. It is the responsibility of education providers to ensure they have provided AHPRA with the details of all students enrolled in an approved program of study or who are undertaking clinical training.

#### Students enrolled in approved programs of study

AHPRA will request an update of all new and existing students enrolled in an approved program of study from all education providers twice a year to coincide with each academic census date (March and August).

Note: Under the National Law, an approved program of study, for a health profession means an accredited program of study—

- (a) approved under section 49(1) by the National Board established for the health profession; and
- (b) included in the list published by the National Agency under section 49(5).

A list of approved programs of study can be found on each of the Boards' [websites](#).

## Students undertaking clinical training

Student registration also applies to students who are **not** enrolled in an approved program of study but are undertaking clinical training (clinical placement, rotation etc.) in a health profession for which they do not hold health practitioner registration. For more information on clinical training, please refer to the [Fact Sheet and FAQ for education providers](#).

Education providers must provide student details to AHPRA at the start of their clinical training.

For the purpose of clinical training, education providers also include health services, other organisations and in some instances, individuals.

## Frequently asked questions

### Why do students need to be registered?

When passing the National Law, Australian parliaments decided that students should be registered in the interests of public safety. Ministers for Health were guided by this principle and determined that the impact of registration on students should be as limited as is necessary to protect public safety. They agreed that the National Scheme would enable National Boards to act on student impairment matters or when there is a conviction of a serious nature that may impact on public safety.

### What impact does registration have on students?

Under the National Law, information about students will be entered on the Student Register. This information is **not** published online and is **not** publicly available. The information AHPRA requests from education providers includes:

- name of Education Provider
- student's name
- student ID number
- student's date of birth
- student's sex
- student's mailing address in Australia and email details
- name of the approved program of study or clinical training being undertaken by the student
- the date on which the student started the approved program of study or clinical training
- the date on which the student is expected to complete the approved program of study or clinical training
- for students that have completed or otherwise ceased to be enrolled in the approved program of study or clinical training, the date of the completion or cessation, and
- the reason why the student completed or otherwise ceased to be enrolled in the approved program of study or clinical training.

No fee applies to student registration.

Each Board's role is focused on registering students and managing notifications about students:

- whose health is impaired to such a degree that there may be substantial risk of harm to the public, or
- who have been found guilty of an offence punishable by 12 months imprisonment or more, or
- who have a conviction of, or are the subject of, a finding of guilt for an offence punishable by imprisonment, or
- who have contravened an existing condition or undertaking.

Notifications may be received by AHPRA from either:

- an education provider who is required under the National Law to report students whose health is impaired to such a degree that there may be substantial risk of harm to the public, or
- a person or organisation who voluntarily reports the student for a health impairment or criminal matter and/or a contravention of an existing condition or undertaking.

National Boards and AHPRA have no role to play in the academic progress or conduct of students (other than offences punishable by 12 months imprisonment or more, or, when they have a conviction of, or are the subject of, a finding of guilt for an offence punishable by imprisonment). Matters relating to academic progress or conduct are for education providers to address.

### **Which professions will have registered students?**

13 of the 14 National Boards register students who are enrolled in approved programs of study.

The Psychology Board of Australia does not register students. Students enrolled in an approved program of study that leads to registration with the Psychology Board of Australia need to apply for provisional registration. Psychology students wishing to apply for provisional registration must do so either at the beginning of:

- a) the 4+2 internship program; or
- b) their higher degree pathway.

Students undertaking clinical training in psychology will need to contact the local AHPRA office to apply for registration before commencing their clinical training. Details of local offices can be found on the [Contact Us](#) page of the website.

Please note that student registration is not required for people who are already registered in the health profession in which training is being undertaken.

### **I am a student enrolled in an approved program of study, what do I have to do to get registered?**

You do not have to do anything to register as a student with your National Board.\* AHPRA will work with your education provider to obtain all relevant information about currently enrolled students in approved programs of study. This list will be either re-confirmed after each academic census date or before the start of the course, if this is at a different time.

\*If you are a Psychology student, please refer to the question on 'Which professions will have registered students?'

### **What period of time will I be registered as a student?**

All National Boards (except Psychology which is not registering students) have confirmed that registration of students will commence:

1. from the first year of the program for students enrolled in approved programs of study; or
2. on commencement of clinical training

Student registration ends when a student completes or otherwise ceases to be enrolled in an approved program of study or clinical training. The obligation rests with the education provider to advise AHPRA of students who complete or cease their approved program of study or clinical training.

### **Will the boards know my academic results?**

No, not while you are studying. The National Boards and AHPRA have no role to play in the academic progress or conduct of students (other than offences punishable by 12 months imprisonment or more; or, when they have a conviction, or they are the subject of, a finding of guilt for an offence punishable by imprisonment). Education providers manage independently their own disciplinary and academic progress pathways.

Once a student has successfully met the course requirements and is eligible for registration, they will be required to lodge an application for registration. It will be at this point that the relevant National Board and AHPRA will have access to the student's academic results.

### **Why does AHPRA need my email address?**

AHPRA asks education providers to supply students' email addresses to establish and enable ongoing communication. AHPRA may use email to communicate with you about administrative matters. National Boards may use email to communicate about matters relating to their profession, including newsletters.

### **Will I receive a registration certificate or notification of my registration from AHPRA?**

No. Students will not receive a certificate of registration or any form of confirmation of student registration from AHPRA. The student register is not a public register. Health services and other entities seeking proof of a student's registration will need to contact the education provider with whom the student is enrolled, to verify students are registered.

### **How will I know that I am registered as a student?**

The Student Register is not published online and is not publicly available. Information on the Student Register must remain confidential under the National Law and is not accessible to education providers, health services or students.

Under the National Law, your education provider is obliged to notify students once AHPRA has confirmed that students have been successfully added to the Student Register. Therefore, students need to contact their education provider to obtain confirmation that they are registered with AHPRA as a student if the education provider has not been forthcoming with this information.

### **Will I be automatically registered as a practitioner after I complete my studies?**

No. There is a separate process with specific registration standards that must be met when you apply for registration as a health practitioner. More information about the registration standards for each National Board is published on the AHPRA website [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au) and individual Board's [websites](#).

For more information about the graduate registration process please visit the [Graduate Applications](#) section of the website.

### **What are my obligations as a student to tell AHPRA?**

Under the National Law, students enrolled in an approved program of study or undertaking clinical training must notify AHPRA through the local office within seven days of becoming aware that:

- they have been charged with an offence punishable by 12 months imprisonment or more or
- they have been convicted of, or are the subject of, a finding of guilt for an offence punishable by imprisonment or
- their registration under the law of another country that provides for the registration of students has been suspended or cancelled.

Visit the [Contact Us](#) section of the AHPRA website for the contact details of your local AHPRA office.

### **What is a voluntary notification against a student?**

Any entity (person or organisation) may make a voluntary notification to AHPRA about a student when they believe that the student:

- has been charged with an offence, or has been convicted or found guilty of an offence, that is punishable by 12 months imprisonment or more or
- has, or may have an impairment that they believe may harm the public or
- has, or may have, contravened a condition of the student's registration or an undertaking given by the student to the National Board.

The National Law provides protection from civil, criminal and administrative liability for those persons, who in good faith make a notification under the National Law.

### **What happens when a voluntary, mandatory or self notification is made against a student?**

AHPRA will assess all notifications to determine whether a Board must consider taking immediate action to protect public health or safety. More information about this process is published on the [Notification Process](#) page of the AHPRA website.