



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 for education providers

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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.

Ministers for Health have been guided by the principle of public safety 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 health impairment matters or when there is a criminal conviction of a serious nature that may adversely impact on public safety. However, the National Boards have no role to play in the academic progress or conduct of students.

#### Privacy and Confidentiality

The Student Register is confidential. AHPRA cannot provide validation of student enrolment to health services that are not the designated education provider. AHPRA and National Boards take their obligations to protect individual's privacy seriously. The National Law imposes a duty of confidentiality on persons exercising functions under the Law, and information is only disclosed by AHPRA or a National Board if the disclosure is within the law.

The privacy law regime which applies to the National Registration Scheme is the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) and the National Privacy Principles under the Privacy Act (Cth). To ensure a uniform national approach to privacy issues, the states and territories have excluded the Privacy Act (however described in each jurisdiction) from its application to the National Registration Scheme.

The National Law states that a National Board may request information from an educational body where the Board requires the information to exercise its functions under this Law. An educational body receiving such a request is expressly authorised to give the information to the National Board.

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

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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 National Board [website](#).

### The definition of an education provider

The definition of an education provider in the [National Law](#) is broad.

Education provider is defined as:

- a) a university; or
- b) a tertiary education institution, or another institution or organisation, that provides vocational training; or
- c) a specialist medical college or other health profession college.

The meaning of this definition includes:

- education providers delivering Board approved programs of study leading to registration; as well as;
- education providers, health services and other organisations or individuals who host students for clinical experience placements (clinical training)

### The definition of clinical training

The National Law does not provide a definition for the term 'clinical training'. Under the obligations imposed by section 91 of the National Law it has been taken to mean any form of clinical experience (also known as clinical placements, rotations etc.) in a health profession that does not form part of an approved program of study AND where the person does not hold registration in the health profession in which the clinical training is being undertaken. This might apply, for example:

- a) when an overseas student arranges a clinical placement as part of the course requirements set out by the education provider in their home country;
- b) when an education provider is running a course that is accredited by an [Accreditation Authority](#) but has not yet been [approved](#) by a National Board;
- c) when an education provider is running a course that has not yet been accredited by an Accreditation Authority OR approved by a National Board

### Getting students registered

AHPRA will issue a formal notice consistent with the National Law to coincide with census dates for Universities and TAFEs (March and August) to all education providers who are running an approved program of study.

AHPRA will continue to work closely with education providers to make sure ongoing data transfer is smooth. To promote this, education providers must:

- nominate a single point of contact for the collection, collation and submission of **all** students from **all** professions across **all** campuses/locations
- provide a **single** file only that contains details of **all** students from **all** professions across **all** campuses/locations (where relevant)
- record file information in the sheet named 'File Info' of the [Education Provider Student Data Template](#) (Template)

- include all of the required fields stipulated either using the template provided or by ensuring any data extracts replicate all the column headers exactly and in the same order as noted in the template, and
- provide a full extract of **all** students in approved programs of study to AHPRA. This will ensure AHPRA is advised of any changes to student details and or students who have ceased/completed their approved programs of study and/or clinical training.

Note: AHPRA has requested only information required under the National Law. If the information is not available, or is not held by the institution, education providers should advise AHPRA of this when submitting file/s to avoid any delays.

Send populated templates to [studentregistration@ahpra.gov.au](mailto:studentregistration@ahpra.gov.au) or contact AHPRA on this email address to arrange secure file transfer.

AHPRA will confirm students are registered with the education provider only after **all** student data received has been successfully processed.

Where there are data errors within a file, a report will be issued to the education provider outlining which records need corrections.

Individual students do **not** need to do anything to register with their National Board and be part of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme.

### **Mandatory and voluntary notification requirements for education providers**

An education provider is required under the National Law to notify AHPRA if they reasonably believe:

- a student enrolled in a program of study provided by the education provider has an impairment that, in the course of the student undertaking the clinical component as part of the program of study, may place the public at substantial risk of harm; or
- a student for whom an education provider has arranged clinical training has an impairment that, in the course of the student undertaking clinical training, may place the public at substantial risk of harm.

Any entity (person or organisation) may make a voluntary notification about a student to AHPRA 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.

### **Reporting requirements**

In circumstances when a National Board suspends a student, imposes conditions on their registration or accepts an undertaking from a student, the National Board is required to give written notice of the event to the education provider who must, as soon as practicable after receiving the written notice, give notice to any entity with whom the student is undertaking clinical training.