

Australian Psychology Leading Australia Toward Better Health and Wellbeing¹

Our 2015 Vision:

Psychology in Australia, as both a discipline and a profession, is recognized as the best source of scientific knowledge, education, training and practice for understanding and changing human thinking, feeling and behaviour.

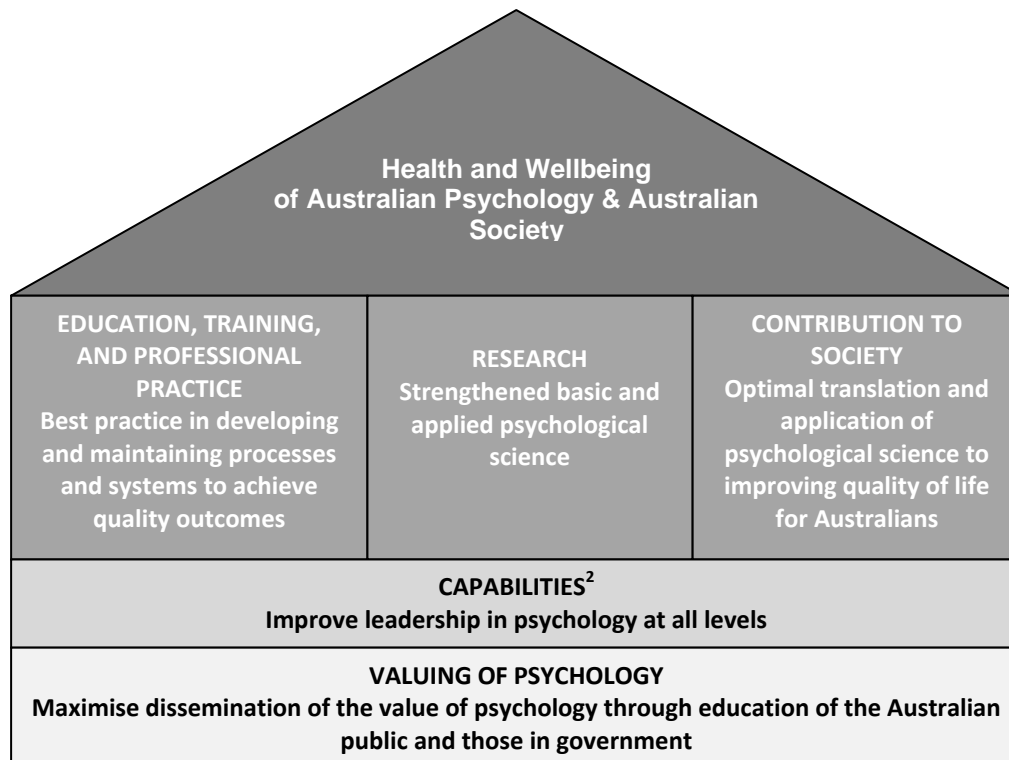
In achieving this vision, we value:

1. A scientist-practitioner model of education and training
2. Quality standards for education, training and professional practice
3. Evidence-based practice in education, training and continued professional development
4. Quality basic and applied psychological research
5. The relevance of psychology in other disciplines and professions
6. Equity, opportunity and diversity in psychology
7. The moral and ethical motivation, and increasing potential, for psychology to contribute to human self-understanding and improved quality of life
8. The enhancement of social and health outcomes for Australians through the development of psychology as a discipline and as a profession.

Rationale:

Psychology is the best provider of scientific knowledge, education, training and practice for understanding and changing human behaviour. The issue is that this is not currently recognized by the Australian public and governments. To bring this vision to fruition, we need a range of strategies, and in particular strategic leadership by psychologists, at multiple levels and in various contexts. If we are successful in achieving this vision then all Australians will benefit.

¹ Support for this aspect of a Discipline-based Initiative in Psychology has been provided by The Australian Learning and Teaching Council (formerly Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education Ltd), an initiative of the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. The views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of The Australian Learning and Teaching Council. This document was authored by J.Cranney@unsw.edu.au, and has also been commented upon, but not necessarily endorsed in its entirety, by G.Bates, L.Cohen, K.Frankcom, M.Katsikitis, L.Littlefield, P.Lovibond, F.Martin, L.Mellish, I.Montgomery, S.Provost, F.Quirk, K.Varcin, N.Voudouris, S.Zhang. **Version** 31/7/08.



Psychology globally is championing the cause for psychology’s contribution to society. The realisation of this contribution however, is hampered by a lack of appreciation of psychology by the general public and by those in government. Given its geographical, historical and cultural situation, Australian psychology is in a unique position to play a leadership role in forging new directions for the discipline and profession of psychology, and its contribution to human health and wellbeing. The existing peak bodies in Australian psychology have the potential to provide the strategic and inclusive leadership that is required to achieve this vision. These peak discipline bodies include: Heads of Schools and Departments of Psychology Association (HODSPA), Australian Psychological Society (APS), the Program Development and Accreditation Committee (PDAC) of APS, Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC), Council of Psychologists Registration Boards of Australasia (CPRB), Australian Psychology Educators Network (APEN; also the APS Teaching, Learning and Psychology Interest Group), The Psychology Foundation of Australia (PFA). Psychologists in Australia constitute a registered profession. The title of “psychologist” is

² This icon was adapted from the UNSW (2007) “B2B Blueprint to Beyond 2010”, www.unsw.edu.au/about/pad/B2B_UNSW_Strategic_Intent.pdf

protected by legislation and requires the person to achieve a certain standard of education in an accredited course and also to adhere to certain standards of competency and ethics.

Finally, it should be noted that the current document is a work in progress that will change with continued input from the peak discipline bodies and associated stakeholders (i.e., psychologists, psychology students, consumers of psychological services, and employers of psychologists).

EDUCATION, TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Objective: Best practice in developing and maintaining processes and systems to achieve quality outcomes for graduates and professionals and for the protection of the public

Strategies:

1. Reviewing models of education and training by the peak discipline bodies and statutory authorities
2. Reviewing program accreditation processes and standards by the peak discipline bodies and statutory bodies
3. Reviewing professional registration systems and standards by the peak discipline bodies and statutory authorities
4. Improving resources for education and training in psychology
5. Supporting innovation and creativity in developing best practice
6. Supporting communities of practice within education, training and work-places
7. Supporting the continued professional development of practicing psychologists
8. Reviewing workplace integrated learning processes in the psychology curriculum

RESEARCH

Objective: Strengthened basic and applied psychological research in Australia

Strategies:

1. Being consistently categorised as a behavioural science by universities and by key research funding organisations
2. Psychology academic units (i.e., departments and schools) supporting the development of active research programs for all academic staff members, including quality research training for all students
3. Providing appropriate research environment, resources, facilities and equipment

4. Developing and expanding industry and research linkages both in Australia and internationally

CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY

Objective: Optimal translation and application of psychological science to improving quality of life for all Australians

Strategies:

1. Peak discipline bodies engaging with university research/academic personnel to identify opportunities for the translation of psychological research findings into relevant applications
2. Peak discipline bodies engaging with government and community organisations to identify opportunities for the productive application of psychological science to solving and preventing behavioural problems at the individual, organizational and community/societal levels.
3. Peak discipline bodies facilitating dissemination of the outcomes of such applications
4. Psychology academic units seeking opportunities to contribute to understanding of, and change in, university organisational behaviour
5. Peak disciplinary bodies developing strategies to assist undergraduate students to learn about the application of psychological knowledge to self and others
6. Psychology academic units seeking opportunities to work with other disciplines and professions in the understanding of human behaviour

CAPABILITIES

Objective: Improved leadership in psychology at all levels

Strategies:

1. Strengthening leadership training in university programs to enable psychologists to take leadership roles in their workplaces and communities, including professional contexts such as the setting of registration standards
2. Supporting inclusive leadership processes in communities of practice and within organizational units
3. Peak discipline bodies supporting leadership development programs for their members, ensuring development in areas of need

VALUING OF PSYCHOLOGY

Objective: Maximum dissemination of the value of psychology through education of the Australian public and those in government

Strategies:

1. Peak discipline bodies collaboratively creating processes to influence and inform Federal and State governments with one voice
2. Peak discipline bodies collaboratively creating educational media for the Australian Public
3. Psychology academic units enhancing the opportunities for students from a variety of different programs to learn about psychology through (a) allowing access to first year courses and majors as is currently the case, and (b) promoting interdisciplinary educational, and inter-professional training programs
4. Psychology academic units enhancing the quality of the educational experience for students who major in psychology but do not go on to become professional psychologists
5. Peak discipline bodies collaborating with State and Federal Education Departments to facilitate a standard quality high-school educational experience in the discipline of psychology
6. Peak discipline bodies ensuring constructive and selective (a) engagement with other disciplines and professions, including interdisciplinary education and research, and inter-professional training, particularly beyond health, (b) membership on key public interest and government committees, and (c) representation to government bodies