

The Australian Psychology Accreditation Council Limited (APAC) is implementing a risk-based approach to accreditation decision making. This approach is outlined in the [Framework for risk-based decision making and delegations \(2023\)](#).

What is the risk-based approach?

A risk-based approach targets resources where they are most needed and prove most effective.

APAC assesses a provider's alignment with the Accreditation Standards and then determines whether conditions are required to address identified shortfalls. Thereafter, APAC will assign an **overall risk rating** to each provider in line with the conditions imposed, the **risk consequences** and **risk likelihood** they represent.

This methodology ensures that any regulatory actions:

- are necessary to ensure Accreditation Standards are met (regulatory actions address identified deficits)
- reflect the level of risk arising from compliance concerns (high risks receive high priority and attention)
- are proportionate to the nature of compliance concerns (remedial actions are tailored to risks at hand).

Why is APAC implementing a risk-based approach?

The risk-based approach will inform our accreditation decisions and enhance transparency. It will also support benchmarking and help to identify which providers may need additional support and/or oversight.

This approach is being driven by the APAC Board and National Health Practitioner Ombudsman (NHPO), bringing APAC's practices in line with other accreditation bodies that function under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009 and the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Act 2011.

What does this mean for providers and when is the rollout?

Any provider that receives one or more conditions will receive one of the following overall risk ratings: **Low**, **Medium**, **High** or **Extreme**. Providers that are compliant with all Accreditation Standards will receive a **Negligible** Risk Rating.

The ratings will not be disclosed to the public or other providers.

The implementation of this initiative will be staggered over time as shown in this high-level timeline.



When assigning risk ratings, APAC will consider many factors including, but not limited to, evidence provided by the School/Discipline, the nature and severity of risk impacts, the probability of risks occurring, and each provider's contextual factors (e.g. regulatory history), which may contribute to or mitigate the risks.

What happens if a provider receives a High or Extreme risk rating?

Providers considered **High** or **Extreme** risk will be monitored more closely by APAC to ensure that conditions are given the appropriate levels of attention and that resources are allocated to resolve them in a timely manner.

APAC will take a collaborative approach to guide providers to meet the Accreditation Standards. However, providers that consistently fail to act promptly and meaningfully to resolve compliance concerns may receive escalated regulatory decisions proportionate to the issues at hand. This may include increased APAC oversight, formal cautions, reduced periods of program accreditation and, in very extreme cases, revocation of program accreditation.

Conversely, providers rated **Negligible** risk will receive less oversight from APAC. For example, there may be reduced reporting requirements if the provider has demonstrated consistent compliance over time.