

## Nurse Practitioner Accreditation Standard 2015

# Frequently Asked Questions

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### Who is ANMAC?

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (ANMAC) is the independent accrediting authority for the nursing and midwifery professions under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme. ANMAC commenced operations on 1 July 2010.

Our organisation is accountable to the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) for assuring the Australian community that graduates of accredited programs can practise and care for people in a safe and competent manner.

The nursing and midwifery professions inform our work and our Board includes directors from a wide range of stakeholder organisations, enabling us to incorporate expert and community views into our decision making.

### What are ANMAC accreditation standards?

Accreditation focuses on the capacity of education providers and on the quality of educational programs they offer.

ANMAC is responsible for maintaining the currency and integrity of accreditation standards for nursing and midwifery programs leading to registration and endorsement in Australia. We use the standards to assess programs to ensure the graduate achieves quality learning outcomes.

Developing or reviewing accreditation standards for entry to practice and re-entry to practice programs is part of a broader process of assuring the community that, having completed an accredited program, practitioners have achieved outcomes agreed to by the profession and are able to practise safely and in a manner equipped with the necessary foundation knowledge, professional motivations and essential skills.

### Why have the Accreditation Standards for Nurse Practitioner Programs been revised?

ANMAC regularly reviews and improves accreditation standards used to assess programs to ensure their continued relevance and effectiveness in contemporary education and health care environments.

The ANMAC *Nurse Practitioner Accreditation Standards 2015* replace the *Nurse Practitioners: Standards and Criteria for the Accreditation of Nursing and Midwifery Courses Leading to Registration, Enrolment, Endorsement and Authorisation in Australia—with Evidence Guide February 2009* published by the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council (ANMC). ANMAC

adopted the ANMC standards when the National Accreditation and Regulation Scheme<sup>1</sup> commenced in 2010. The newly revised Nurse Practitioner Accreditation Standards 2015 were developed through an extensive review process that was guided by an Expert Advisory Group (EAG).

The ANMAC *Nurse Practitioner Accreditation Standards 2015* have been approved by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia and were published on the ANMAC website 31 July 2015.

## What are the main changes to the Nurse Practitioner Accreditation Standards 2015?

The ANMAC *Nurse Practitioner Accreditation Standards 2015* introduce new standard titles, new concepts and changes in terminology and definitions. The structure of the newly revised accreditation standards is described in Table 1.

**Table 1: Comparison of 2009 and 2015 standard structure**

Standard number	2009 ANMC standard structure	2015 ANMAC standard structure
Standard 1	Governance	Governance
Standard 2	Academic staffing	Curriculum conceptual framework
Standard 3	Students	Program development and structure
Standard 4	Course length and structure	Program content
Standard 5	Curriculum content	Student assessment
Standard 6	Approaches to teaching and learning	Students
Standard 7	Student assessment	Resources
Standard 8	Professional experience	Management of workplace experience
Standard 9	Research	Quality improvement and risk management

A number of qualitative changes have been integrated across the *Nurse Practitioner Accreditation Standards 2015*. The most significant change being Criterion 3.6 which introduces the concept of 'supernumerary' practice.

This change recognises findings from the [CLLEVER](#) study (2014) that shows, where the employed role and student role co-exist, employment requirements take precedence over the nurse practitioner students' learning and teaching requirements.

<sup>1</sup> AHPRA (2009). *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009*, as enacted in each state and territory. Viewed at: [www.ahpra.gov.au/Legislation-and-Publications/Legislation.aspx](http://www.ahpra.gov.au/Legislation-and-Publications/Legislation.aspx) on 5 March 2015.

The pedagogical importance of being able to prioritise clinical learning and teaching is influenced by the NMBA's position that *advanced practice nursing*, as an endorsed nurse practitioner, is qualitatively different to *advanced nursing practice as a registered nurse*.

To facilitate students moving beyond 'advanced nursing practice', education providers are now required to demonstrate that nurse practitioner programs include access to supervised supernumerary integrated professional practice. This supernumerary time enables students to focus on acquiring the necessary knowledge and skills to meet the nurse practitioner's additional legislative functions and regulatory requirements, including achievement of the Nurse Practitioner Standards for practice.

Other important changes include:

- Emphasising the need for shared governance arrangements between education and health service providers to monitor students' practice experience and learning and teaching in the clinical setting.
- Broadening of nurse practitioner program curricula and student practice to encompass both primary health care principles and specialty knowledge and skills.
- Introducing the term 'integrated professional practice' (IPP) to replace 'professional practice'
- Modifying program entry criteria so that student attributes include consolidated clinical experience in advanced nursing practice and a demonstrated capacity to complete postgraduate clinical studies.
- Requiring education providers to demonstrate students, supervisors and staff are adequately indemnified for relevant activities undertaken as part of program requirements.
- Removing reference to 'a complete episode of care', 'extended or specialised nursing practice' and 'professional experience support systems'.

## What consultation process did ANMAC undertake when revising these accreditation standards?

In developing an accreditation standard for a health profession, the law governing the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme requires accreditation authorities to undertake wide-ranging consultation on the content of accreditation standards.

The review of the *Nurse Practitioner Accreditation Standards 2015* was guided by an EAG selected for expertise in consumer advocacy; nurse practitioner practice, education and research; health service delivery and management; regulation and accreditation, professional and industrial matters and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. The EAG oversaw all aspects of the review, including stakeholder consultation and synthesis of stakeholder feedback in the revised accreditation standards. Key stakeholders were invited to engage in the consultation process through written submissions or via online surveys accessible during two six-week periods of public consultation<sup>2</sup>. Additionally stakeholders were invited to attend any of the consultation forums, held in Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth or Sydney.

<sup>2</sup> Consultation periods: Round 1 – 30 May to 11 July 2015, Round 2 – 24 September to 3 November 2015

Consultation forums were attended by stakeholders representing consumers, private and public practice clinicians, higher education and industry sectors, the Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives, the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia, the Council of Deans of Nursing and Midwifery (Australia & New Zealand), the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation, the Australian College of Nurse Practitioners, the Australian College of Nursing, the Australian College of Mental Health Nurses, the Renal Society of Australasia, the Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network and the Council of Remote Area Nurses of Australia-*plus*.

### **What advice did ANMAC seek from the Office of Best Practice Regulation when revising these accreditation standards?**

All accreditation standards developed by ANMAC must now be submitted to the Office of Best Practice Regulation (OBPR) for review prior to approval by the NMBA.

The OBPR is a division within the Australian Government's Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet but has independence from the Department in assessing and reporting on compliance with the best practice regulation requirements. The OBPR assesses whether Regulation Impact Statements are required

In preparing the *Nurse Practitioner Accreditation Standards 2015*, ANMAC has consulted with the OBPR and provided feedback to the NMBA on the potential regulatory impacts provided in the consultation process and identified in developing the revised accreditation standards.

### **When do the *Nurse Practitioner Accreditation Standards 2015* come into effect?**

The ANMAC *Nurse Practitioner Accreditation Standards* are effective from 31 July 2015. This is the date the accreditation standards were released by ANMAC.

### **Why has the name of the Standards changed?**

Historically, Entry Programs for Internationally Qualified Registered Nurses have been referred to as *Nurse Practitioners: Standards and Criteria for the Accreditation of Nursing and Midwifery Courses Leading to Registration, Enrolment, Endorsement and Authorisation in Australia—with Evidence Guide February 2009*. The standards have been renamed to enable easy identification of the practitioner type to which they apply. The name of the program of study is specified within the revised *Nurse Practitioner Accreditation Standards 2015*.

### **Are previous accreditation standards for nurse practitioner programs still valid?**

Previously, nurse practitioner programs of study were accredited against the *Nurse Practitioners: Standards and Criteria for the Accreditation of Nursing and Midwifery Courses Leading to Registration, Enrolment, Endorsement and Authorisation in Australia—with Evidence Guide February 2009* published by the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council (ANMC).

The *Nurse Practitioners: Standards and Criteria for the Accreditation of Nursing and Midwifery Courses Leading to Registration, Enrolment, Endorsement and Authorisation in Australia—with Evidence Guide February 2009* will continue to be used to monitor and assess modifications to programs that were accredited against this version of the standards.

With the release of the ANMAC *Nurse Practitioner Accreditation Standards 2015* submission of applications for accreditation of programs based on the ANMC *Nurse Practitioners: Standards and Criteria for the Accreditation of Nursing and Midwifery Courses Leading to Registration, Enrolment, Endorsement and Authorisation in Australia—with Evidence Guide February 2009* will no longer be accepted by ANMAC.

### **How do the *Nurse Practitioner Accreditation Standards 2015* affect education providers with a currently accredited program?**

Education providers who have a currently accredited nurse practitioner program who are not seeking to change their program following the release of the revised accreditation standards do not need to take any action.

All future applications for the accreditation of nurse practitioner programs will need to address the *Nurse Practitioner Accreditation Standards 2015*.

### **How do the *Nurse Practitioner Accreditation Standards 2015* affect education providers planning to run a nurse practitioner program in the future?**

From 31 July 2015, all education providers submitting a nurse practitioner program to ANMAC for accreditation will need to address the *Nurse Practitioner Accreditation Standards 2015*. Information on the requirements for this submission are contained in the [application pack](#).

### **How do the *Nurse Practitioner Accreditation Standards 2015* affect students currently enrolled in a nurse practitioner program?**

Students are advised to contact their education provider to discuss whether the new accreditation standards will affect their program.

### **Where can I find further information about the ANMAC *Nurse Practitioner Accreditation Standards 2015*?**

Further information on the *Nurse Practitioner Accreditation Standards 2015* is available on the [ANMAC website](#). Education providers should direct all questions to the Executive Director, Accreditation and Assessment Services at ANMAC on telephone 02 6257 7960 or email [donna.mowbray@anmac.org.au](mailto:donna.mowbray@anmac.org.au)

**ANMAC Strategy Implementation and Communications Group  
31 July 2015**