

# Accreditation Standards for Re-entry to the Register – Registered Nurse 2014

FINAL CONSULTATION

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# Acknowledgements

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## 1. Preamble

### 1.1. Background to the development of the Accreditation Standards Re-entry to the Register - Registered Nurse

The Australian regulatory environment in which nurses are registered, and programs of study accredited and delivered, has undergone significant change in the past few years. Higher education regulation and quality assurance have also undergone major transformation. Further, national reforms in health policy, governance and funding are being implemented and have further implications for nursing education. These changes formed the basis for reviewing and creating the *Accreditation Standards for Re-entry to the Register - Registered Nurse 2014* outlined in this document.

There are currently four pathways leading to Registration as a Registered Nurse in Australia.

- Completion of an accredited entry to practice program, (three year Bachelor of Nursing as a minimum)
- A prescribed period of supervised practice as determined by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) for the purposes of re-entry only
- A Re-entry to Practice program for those who have previously been registered in Australia and are determined eligible by the NMBA
- Completion of an accredited and approved Entry Program for Internationally Qualified Registered Nurses

## 1.2. Review of the existing ANMAC Accreditation Standards

In 2011, the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (ANMAC) undertook an extensive review of the standards leading to initial registration as a nurse and released the *Registered Nurse Accreditation Standards 2012*. These Standards are now the basis for accreditation of approved programs of study for initial entry to the Australian health practitioners register as a Registered Nurse educated in Australia. They have therefore appropriately formed the foundation document for the review of all ANMAC accreditation standards which lead to registration as a Registered Nurse, either by re-entry or for nurses educated overseas. i.e. *Accreditation Standards for Re-Entry to the Register - Registered Nurse* and the *Accreditation Standards for Entry Programs for Internationally Qualified – Registered Nurse*. The new Accreditation Standards for Re-entry RN replaces the existing ANMC *Standards and Criteria for the Accreditation of Nursing and Midwifery Courses: Re-entry to the Register Standards Registered Nurses (2010)*<sup>1</sup>.

## 1.3. Recency of practice requirements

Under the Health Practitioner National Law Act as in force in each State and Territory, the NMBA sets registration standards as well as professional codes, standards and guidelines that underpin safe and competent practice. The NMBA's *Recency of practice registration standard* was approved on 31 March 2010. Under the standard, nurses must have undertaken sufficient practice to demonstrate competence in their profession within the preceding five years. The NMBA also determines pathways to practice for those who either do not meet the recency practice requirements or who have previously held registration as a nurse in Australia. Individuals whose nursing registration has lapsed may be eligible to re-enter the register upon the successful completion of an approved program of study known as a Re-Entry RN Program.

## 1.4. Rationale for the implementation of the Accreditation Standards for Re-entry to the Register – RN

The guiding principle for implementing the Accreditation Standards for Re-entry to the Register RN is to promote an increase in the availability of accredited programs and to ensure a more flexible and cost effective pathway for applicants seeking re-entry to practice following a lapse in registration as nurse. Individualised assessment and referral of applicants by the NMBA into any of the four pathways leading

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Nursing Midwifery Council (2010) Standards and Criteria for the Accreditation of Nursing and Midwifery Courses : re - entry to the Register Standards Registered Nurses.  
<http://www.anmac.org.au/sites/default/files/documents/Standards%20and%20criteria%20for%20the%20accreditation%20of%20nursing%20and%20midwifery%20courses%20-%20Re%20Entry%20to%20the%20Register%20Standards%20-%20RN%20May%202010.pdf> viewed 4 September 2013.

to registration as a nurse will ensure that accredited education and health service providers of the Re-entry RN programs are not be disadvantaged by the *Accreditation Standards for Re-entry to the Register – Registered Nurse 2014* and may also engage in the supervised practice pathway for re-entry.

### **1.5. Development of the Accreditation Standards for Re-entry to the Register – RN**

In October 2012, the ANMAC Board convened an Expert Advisory Group (EAG) to oversee the development of the Accreditation Standards for EPIQ – RN and Re-entry to the Register – RN. The standards were developed around three key consultation stages:

#### **Stage 1—First consultation process**

The EAG prepared the first consultation paper, which was approved by ANMAC’s Standards Accreditation and Assessment Committee (SAAC) and the ANMAC Board and distributed to stakeholders before the first consultation forum.<sup>2</sup> Stakeholders could provide feedback by attending a forum, sending a submission or email or responding to an electronic survey.

The consultation paper was published on ANMAC’s website with the public invited to provide comment. The paper provided the background, context, purpose and process of the review and addressed key areas of change in education and health policy relevant to the development of the proposed accreditation standards.

This first consultation process identified strong support for aligning the Accreditation Standards for EPIQ-RN and Re-entry to the Register - RN with the *Registered Nurse Accreditation Standards (2012)* and articulating, at a minimum, desired competency outcomes of entry-level programs.

Four issues emerged from the first consultation which were explored further by the EAG, SAAC and ANMAC Board.

The first issue being whether an education provider of entry programs for registration as a registered nurse should be a higher education provider or be required to demonstrate formal evidence of a relationship with such a provider. The foundation for this premise is twofold:

- education providers delivering these programs must be experienced in assessing students against the practice standards for registered nurses
- the governance of a higher education provider must be subject to the higher standards of performance, quality assurance and governance expected of universities and higher education providers by TEQSA.

The second issue concerned program length.

The third issue involved workplace practice requirements.

The fourth issue explored what award or qualification, if any, would be appropriate for graduates of these programs.

#### **Stage 2—Second consultation process**

The proposed accreditation standards including the four primary issues remaining—category of education provider, what award or qualification, if any, would be appropriate, program content and workplace practice requirements were placed on the ANMAC website inviting stakeholder feedback

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<sup>2</sup> Held in 2013—Melbourne (24 April), Perth (30 April) and Brisbane (7 June).

throughout December 2013 to February 2014. The four primary issues were resolved throughout this stage with the exception of the level and type of qualification required for those individuals seeking re-entry onto the Australian register as a nurses.

### **Stage 3 – Assessment by OBPR**

In May 2014 and in alignment with the requirements of the NMBA and the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet for all agencies delegated the role of reviewing and developing accreditation standards, ANMAC submitted the proposed Accreditation Standards for Re-entry to the Register - RN to the Office of Best Practice Regulation (OBPR) to assess whether a Regulation Impact Statement (RIS) was required. ANMAC received confirmation from the OBPR, in July 2014, that implementation of the proposed accreditation Standards would be minor and would not require any amendments to the proposed process of consultation or a RIS.

### **Stage 4—Final consultation stage**

ANMAC reconvened the EAG to further consider changes to the required level of qualification at the completion of a Re-entry RN program in Australia. The EAG, SAAC and ANMAC Board then determined that the proposed accreditation standards be made available for a final 6 week consultation period throughout July and August 2014.

## **1.6. Ratification and approval of the Accreditation Standards**

While ANMAC is responsible for developing the accreditation standards, the NMBA is responsible for approving them under the National Law. This same dual regulatory function applies to the accreditation of individual programs of study leading to registration or endorsement as a nurse or midwife.

# **2. Introduction**

## **2.1. Accreditation Standards for Re-entry to the Register – RN**

These Standards contain the minimum requirements to be met by education providers seeking accreditation of their program of study by ANMAC. Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA) approved higher education providers must seek, and ultimately attain, accreditation for their nursing program of study. Under section 49(1) of the National Law, graduates of programs cannot register unless their program of study is accredited by ANMAC with accreditation approved by NMBA.

## **2.2. Education providers seeking accreditation to offer the program**

A Re-entry RN program can be delivered by an approved education provider who elects to offer the program to applicants seeking re-entry onto the Australian register with the Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency. The nine Accreditation Standards are listed in Figure 1 with associated criteria.

### **Figure 1 Accreditation Standards for Re-entry to the Register - RN**

#### **STANDARD 1: GOVERNANCE**

The education provider has established governance arrangements for the nursing program of study that develop and deliver a sustainable, high-quality education experience for students,

	to enable them to meet the National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse
<b>STANDARD 2: CURRICULUM CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK</b>	The program provider makes explicit, and uses a contemporary conceptual framework for the nursing program of study that encompasses the educational philosophy underpinning design and delivery and the philosophical approach to professional nursing practice.
<b>STANDARD 3: PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND STRUCTURE</b>	The program of study is developed in collaboration with key stakeholders reflecting contemporary trends in nursing and education; complying in length and structure and complies with the Australian Qualifications Framework for the qualification offered and enabling graduates to meet the National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse. Workplace experience is sufficient to enable safe and competent nursing practice by program completion.
<b>STANDARD 4: PROGRAM CONTENT</b>	The program content delivered by the program provider comprehensively addresses the National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse and incorporates Australian and international best practice perspectives on nursing as well as existing and emerging national and regional health priorities.
<b>STANDARD 5: STUDENT ASSESSMENT</b>	The curriculum incorporates a variety of approaches to assessment that suit the nature of the learning experience and robustly measure achievement of required learning outcomes, including a summative assessment of student performance against the current National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse.
<b>STANDARD 6: STUDENTS</b>	The program provider's approach to attracting, enrolling, supporting and assessing students is underpinned by values of transparency, authenticity, equal opportunity and an appreciation of social and cultural diversity
<b>STANDARD 7: RESOURCES</b>	The program provider has adequate facilities, equipment and teaching resources, as well as staff who are qualified, capable and sufficient in number, to enable students to attain the current National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse.
<b>STANDARD 8: MANAGEMENT OF WORKPLACE EXPERIENCE</b>	The program provider ensures that every student is given supervised workplace experiences conducted in an environment(s) providing suitable opportunities and conditions for students to attain the current National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse.
<b>STANDARD 9: QUALITY IMPROVEMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT</b>	The program provider is able to assess and address risks to the program, its outcomes and students, and has a primary focus on continually improving the quality of the teaching and learning experience for students and the competence of graduates.

## 3. Applications for Accreditation

### 3.1. Submitting and application for accreditation to ANMAC

Education providers seeking accreditation to deliver a Re-entry RN program must address all Standards and Criteria including the following key variations within:

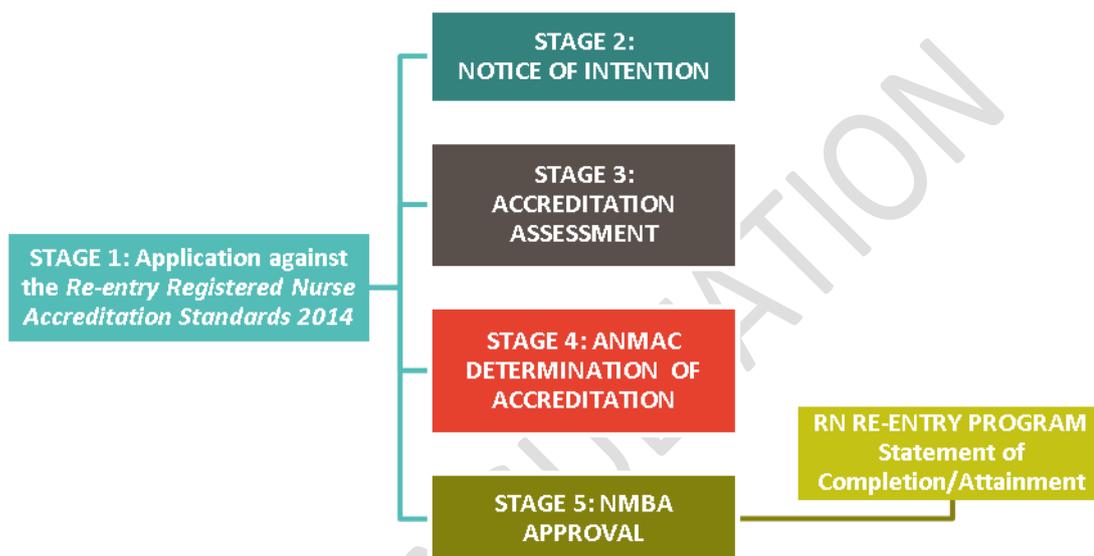
#### Standard 1: Governance

1.3 Meeting the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) requirements for a minimum level 7 award program, and be issued with a statement of completion/attainment by the governing Australian university or higher education provider.

**Standard 3: Program Development and Structure:**

3.6 A workplace experience from 80 to 240 hours, not inclusive of simulation activities, incorporated into the program. Content and sequencing of the program of study prepares students for workplace experience and incorporates opportunities for simulated learning.

**Figure 2 – Application for accreditation in accordance with the Accreditation Standards**



### 3.2. Resources for the Accreditation of a Re-entry to the Register – RN Program

In addition to the requirements outlined within these Accreditation Standards for Re-entry to the Register – RN, education providers seeking accreditation to deliver a Re-entry to the Register – RN program must review the following resources via the:

**I. ANMAC website - <http://www.anmac.org.au/>**

- ANMAC Registered Nurse Accreditation Standards 2012.
- ANMAC National Guidelines for the Accreditation of Nursing and Midwifery Programs Leading to Registration and Endorsement in Australia 2012
- ANMAC Support Tool for Education Providers 2012

**II. NMBA website - <http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/>**

- NMBA Recency of Practice Standard 2012
- NMBA Re-entry to Practice Policy 2010

### **3 Accreditation Standards for Re-Entry to the Register – Registered Nurse**

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## Standard 1: Governance

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*The education provider has established governance arrangements for the nursing program of study that develop and deliver a sustainable, high-quality education experience for students, to enable them to meet the National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse.*

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### Criteria

The program provider must provide evidence of:

- 1.1 One of the following:
  - a) Current registration with the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) as an Australian university or other higher education provider<sup>3</sup> offering an entry to practice registered nurse program<sup>4</sup>.
  - b) Current registration by TEQSA as an Australian university or other higher education provider **not** offering an entry to practice registered nurse program that has a formal agreement in place with an Australian university or other higher education provider with current TEQSA registration and offering an entry to practice registered nurse program.
  - c) An Australian registered training organisation (RTO) that has a formal governance arrangement with an Australian university or other higher education provider with current TEQSA registration and offering an entry to practice registered nurse program.
- 1.2 Current accreditation of this program of study by the university (or TEQSA for non-self-accrediting higher education providers) detailing the expiry date and recommendations, conditions and progress reports related to the school.
- 1.3 Meeting the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) requirements for a minimum level 7 award program, and be issued with a statement of completion/attainment by the governing Australian university or higher education provider.
- 1.4 Current, documented academic governance structure for the university (or other higher education provider) and program provider that ensures academic oversight of the program and promotes high-quality teaching and learning, scholarship, research and ongoing evaluation.
- 1.5 Terms of reference for relevant program advisory committees demonstrating partnership with key stakeholders, including partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health professionals and communities.
- 1.6 Staff delegations, reporting relationships, and the role of persons or committees in decision making related to the program.

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<sup>3</sup> For explanation of provider categories see: Tertiary Education and Quality Standards Agency (2011), *Higher Education Standards (Threshold Standards) 2011 Legislative Instrument, Chapter 2*. Accessed at <http://www.teqsa.gov.au/higher-education-standards-framework> on 7 June 2013.

<sup>4</sup> Entry to practice program: For registration as a registered nurse, the minimum qualification must be a Bachelor degree (or where relevant, a postgraduate qualification) delivered by a university or higher education provider and the minimum length of the course is equivalent to six semesters' full-time study.

- 1.7 Governance arrangements between the university or higher education provider and the program provider that ensures responsiveness to accreditation requirements for ongoing compliance with accreditation standards.
- 1.8 Policies confirming that credit transfer or the recognition of prior learning that are consistent with AQF national principles are not available, with the exception of application to workplace experience, to students seeking entry into the proposed program.

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## Standard 2: Curriculum Conceptual Framework

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*The program provider makes explicit, and uses a contemporary conceptual framework for the nursing program of study that encompasses the educational philosophy underpinning design and delivery and the philosophical approach to professional nursing practice.*

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### Criteria

The program provider demonstrates:

- 2.1 A clearly documented and explained conceptual framework for the program, including the educational and professional nursing philosophies underpinning the curriculum.
- 2.2 The incorporation of contemporary Australian and international best practice teaching, learning and assessment methodologies and technologies to enhance the delivery of curriculum content, stimulate student engagement and promote understanding.
- 2.3 A program of study that is congruent with contemporary and evidence-based approaches to professional nursing practice and education.
- 2.4 Teaching and learning approaches that:
  - a. enable achievement of stated learning outcomes
  - b. facilitate the integration of theory and practice
  - c. scaffold learning appropriately throughout the program
  - d. encourage the application of critical thinking frameworks and problem-solving skills
  - e. engender deep rather than surface learning
  - f. encourage students to become self-directed learners
  - g. embed recognition that graduates take professional responsibility for continuing competence and life-long learning
  - h. instil students with the desire and capacity to continue to use, and learn from, emerging research throughout their careers
  - i. promote emotional intelligence, communication, collaboration, cultural safety, ethical practice and leadership skills expected of registered nurses
  - j. incorporate an understanding of, and engagement with, intraprofessional and interprofessional learning for collaborative practice.

## Standard 3: Program Development and Structure

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***The program of study is developed in collaboration with key stakeholders reflecting contemporary trends in nursing and education; complying in length and structure with the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) for the qualification offered and enabling graduates to meet the National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse. Workplace experience is sufficient to enable safe and competent nursing practice by program completion.***

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### **Criteria**

The program provider demonstrates:

- 3.1 Consultative and collaborative approaches to curriculum design and program organisation between academic staff, those working in health disciplines, students, consumers and other key stakeholders including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health professionals.
- 3.2 Contemporary nursing and education practice in the development and design of curriculum.
- 3.3 A map of subjects against the National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse which clearly identifies the links between learning outcomes, assessments and required graduate competencies.
- 3.4 Descriptions of curriculum content and the rationale for its extent, depth and sequencing in relation to the knowledge, skills and behaviours expected of students.
- 3.5 Opportunities for student interaction with other health professions to support understanding of the multi-professional health care environment and facilitate interprofessional learning for collaborative practice.
- 3.6 A workplace experience from 80 to 240 hours, not inclusive of simulation activities, incorporated into the program. Content and sequencing of the program of study prepares students for workplace experience and incorporates opportunities for simulated learning.
- 3.7 A workplace experience challenge test against the current National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse which is conducted by a registered nurse (registered by the NMBA) for those students seeking recognition of prior learning.
- 3.8 Workplace experience in Australia to consolidate the acquisition of competence and facilitate transition to practice. A summative assessment is made against all National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse in the clinical setting.
- 3.9 Equivalence of subject outcomes for programs taught in Australia in all delivery modes in which the program is offered (subjects delivered on-campus or in mixed-mode, by distance or by e-learning methods).
- 3.10 Where the structure of the program allows for multiple entry pathways for which students receive block credit or advanced standing (other than on an individual basis), evidence that each pathway meets the ANMAC - *Registered Nurse Accreditation Standards*.

## Standard 4: Program Content

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***The program content delivered by the program provider comprehensively addresses the National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse and incorporates Australian and international best practice perspectives on nursing as well as existing and emerging national and regional health priorities.***

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### **Criteria**

The program provider demonstrates:

- 4.1 A comprehensive curriculum document structured around the conceptual framework that includes:
  - a. program structure and delivery modes
  - b. subject outlines
  - c. linkages between subject objectives, learning outcomes and their assessment, and national competencies
  - d. teaching and learning strategies
  - e. a workplace experience plan.
- 4.2 The central focus of the program is nursing practice in the Australian context. This comprises core health professional knowledge and skills and specific nursing practice knowledge and skills that are evidence based, applied across the human lifespan and incorporate existing and emerging national and regional health priorities, health research, health policy and reform.
- 4.3 Nursing research and evidence-based inquiry underpins all elements of curriculum content and delivery.
- 4.4 Program content supports the development and application of professional knowledge and skills including but not limited to:
  - a. critical thinking, analysis and decision making
  - b. essentials of care<sup>5</sup>
  - c. professional culture and behaviour in the Australian health care context
  - d. cultural competence
  - e. delegation, supervision and leadership
  - f. quality improvement methodologies
  - g. research appreciation and translation
  - h. legal and ethical obligations, responsibilities and issues in health care and research
  - i. health informatics and health technology

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<sup>5</sup> Essentials of care are the aspects of care that are fundamental to a person's health and wellbeing (New South Wales Health Essentials of Care program accessed at <http://www0.health.nsw.gov.au/nursing/projects/eoc> on 23 July 2013). These may include, but are not limited to, personal care, promotion of self-care, fluid and nutritional management, clinical interventions including wound management, acute and chronic health care.

- j. social determinants of health and wellbeing
- k. rural and remote health
- l. mental health
- m. chronic disease and self-management
- n. primary health care
- o. health professional regulation and health policy
- p. pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics
- q. National Safety and Quality Standards<sup>6</sup> including but not limited to:
  - documentation and communication
  - recognition of and response to the deteriorating health of the patient
  - infection control
  - quality use of medicines
  - prevention of risk and promotion of safety
  - clinical monitoring and management.

4.5 Inclusion of subject matter that gives students an appreciation of the diversity of Australian culture, develops their knowledge of cultural respect and safety, and engenders the appropriate skills and attitudes.

4.6 Inclusion of discrete subject matter specifically addressing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' history, health, wellness and culture. Health conditions prevalent among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are also appropriately embedded within the curriculum.

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<sup>6</sup> Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (2012), *The National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards*. Accessed at: <http://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/NSQHS-Standards-Sept-2012.pdf> on 23 July 2013.

## Standard 5: Student Assessment

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*The curriculum incorporates a variety of approaches to assessment that suit the nature of the learning experience and robustly measure achievement of required learning outcomes, including a summative assessment of student performance against the current National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse.*

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### Criteria

The program provider demonstrates:

- 5.1 A consistent approach to student assessment across teaching sites and modalities that is periodically reviewed and updated.
- 5.2 Clear statements about assessment and progression requirements provided to students at the commencement of the program.
- 5.3 The level, number and context of assessments are consistent with determining the achievement of the stated learning outcomes.
- 5.4 Both formative and summative assessment types and tasks exist across the program to enhance individual and collective learning as well as inform student progression.
- 5.5 Various assessment approaches across a range of contexts to evaluate competence in the essential knowledge, skills and behaviours required for professional nursing practice.
- 5.6 Assessment of student communication competence and English language proficiency before undertaking workplace experience.
- 5.7 Validated instruments are used in workplace experience assessment to evaluate student knowledge, skills, behaviours and competence.
- 5.8 Ultimate accountability for assessing students in relation to their workplace experience.
- 5.9 Assessments include the appraisal of competence in the quality use of medicines.
- 5.10 Evidence of procedural controls, fairness, reliability, validity and transparency in assessing students.
- 5.11 Processes to ensure the integrity of online assessment.
- 5.12 Collaboration between health service providers (where relevant) and teaching staff in selecting and implementing assessment methods.
- 5.13 A summative assessment of student achievement of competence against the current National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse is conducted by a registered nurse (registered by the NMBA and who has demonstrated current experience in conducting the summative assessment of students in an entry to practice program) in an Australian clinical context before program completion.

## Standard 6: Students

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*The program provider's approach to attracting, enrolling, supporting and assessing students is underpinned by values of transparency, authenticity, equal opportunity and an appreciation of social and cultural diversity.*

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### Criteria

The program provider demonstrates:

- 6.1 Applicants are informed of the following before accepting an offer of enrolment:
  - a. specific requirements for entry to the program of study including English language proficiency
  - b. that education providers will, under the National Law, register students with the NMBA and notify the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency if a student undertaking clinical training has an impairment that may place the public at risk of harm
  - c. specific requirements for right of entry to health services for workplace experience (including fitness for practice, immunisation and criminal history)
  - d. requirements for registration as required and approved by the NMBA including, but not limited to, the explicit registration standard on English language skills.
- 6.2 Students are selected for the program based on clear, justifiable and published admission criteria.
- 6.3 Students have met the NMBA English language proficiency requirements before entering the program and have demonstrated they have the communication skills needed to successfully undertake academic and workplace experience requirements throughout the program.
- 6.4 Students are informed about, and have access to, appropriate support services including counselling, health care and educational advisory services.
- 6.5 Processes to enable early identification and support for students who are not performing well.
- 6.6 All students have equal opportunity to attain the current National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse. The mode or location of program delivery should not influence this.
- 6.7 Processes for student representation and feedback in matters relating to governance and program management, content, delivery and evaluation.

## Standard 7: Resources

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***The program provider has adequate facilities, equipment and teaching resources, as well as staff who are qualified, capable and sufficient in number, to enable students to attain the current National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse.***

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### **Criteria**

The program provider demonstrates:

- 7.1 Staff, facilities, equipment and other teaching resources are sufficient in quality and quantity for the anticipated student population and any planned increase.
- 7.2 Students have sufficient and timely access to academic and clinical teaching staff to support their learning.
- 7.3 A balance of academic, clinical, technical and administrative staff appropriate to meeting teaching, research and governance commitments.
- 7.4 Staff recruitment strategies are culturally inclusive and reflect population diversity in Australia.
- 7.5 Documented position descriptions for teaching staff, clearly articulating roles, reporting relationships, responsibilities and accountabilities.
- 7.6 The head of program is a registered nurse who holds a current Australian general registration, who has no conditions on their registration relating to conduct, and who holds a relevant post-graduate qualification.
- 7.7 Staff teaching and assessing nursing practice related subjects are registered nurses and have relevant clinical and academic experience.
- 7.8 Academic staff are qualified in the relevant discipline for their level of teaching, to at least one qualification standard higher than the program of study being taught or with equivalent professional experience.
- 7.9 In cases where an academic staff member's tertiary qualifications do not include nursing, their qualifications and experience are relevant to the subject areas they are teaching.
- 7.10 Processes to ensure academic staff have a sound understanding of contemporary scholarship and professional practice in the subject areas they teach.
- 7.11 Teaching and learning takes place in an active research environment where academic staff are engaged in research and/or scholarship and/or generating new knowledge. Areas of interest, publications, grants and conference papers are documented. Policies and processes to verify and monitor the academic and professional credentials, including registration, of current and incoming staff and evaluate their performance and development needs.

## Standard 8: Management of Workplace Experience

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***The program provider ensures that every student is given supervised workplace experiences conducted in an environment(s) providing suitable opportunities and conditions for students to attain the current National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse.***

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### **Criteria**

The program provider demonstrates:

- 8.1 Constructive relationships and clear contractual arrangements with all health providers where students gain their workplace experience and processes to ensure these are regularly evaluated and updated.
- 8.2 Risk management strategies in all environments where students are placed to gain their workplace experiences and processes to ensure these are regularly reviewed and updated.
- 8.3 Workplace experiences are appropriate for students to attain the current National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse.
- 8.4 Each student is provided with quality and appropriate workplace experiences that reflect major health priorities and contemporary nursing practice. Opportunities are provided for intraprofessional and interprofessional learning and the development of knowledge, skills and behaviours for collaborative practice.
- 8.5 Clearly articulated models of supervision, support, facilitation and assessment are in place so students can achieve required learning outcomes and current National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse.
- 8.6 Academics, nurse clinicians and other health professionals engaged in supervising and supporting students during workplace experiences are adequately prepared for this role and seek to incorporate contemporary and evidence-based Australian and international perspectives on nursing practice.
- 8.7 Assessment of nursing competence within the context of the workplace experience is undertaken by an appropriately qualified and prepared registered nurse practicing in Australia who has current skills in assessing undergraduate students against the current National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse.
- 8.8 Appropriate resources are provided, monitored and regularly evaluated to support students while on workplace experience.

## Standard 9: Quality Improvement and Risk Management

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*The program provider is able to assess and address risks to the program, its outcomes and students, and has a primary focus on continually improving the quality of the teaching and learning experience for students and the competence of graduates.*

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### Criteria

The program provider demonstrates:

- 9.1 Responsibility and control of program development, monitoring, review, evaluation and quality improvement is delegated to the nursing school with oversight by the academic board and/or appropriate governance body.
- 9.2 Regular evaluation of academic and clinical supervisor effectiveness using feedback from students and other sources; systems to monitor and, where necessary, improve staff performance.
- 9.3 Professional and academic development of staff to advance knowledge and competence in teaching effectiveness and assessment.
- 9.4 Feedback gained from the quality cycle incorporated into the program of study to improve the experience of theory and practice learning for students.
- 9.5 Regular evaluation and revision of program content to include contemporary and emerging issues surrounding nursing practice, health care research and health policy and reform.
- 9.6 Students and staff are adequately indemnified for relevant activities undertaken as part of program requirements.

## 5 Glossary and Abbreviations

**ANMAC**—the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council is the independent accrediting authority for nursing and midwifery under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme. ANMAC sets standards for accreditation and accredits nursing and midwifery programs leading to registration and endorsement; and the providers of those programs.

**ANMC**—the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council evolved into ANMAC following approval as the accrediting authority for nursing and midwifery. ANMC authored the original set of Accreditation Standards as well as the National Competency Standards for nursing and midwifery.

**AQF**—the Australian Qualifications Framework is the national policy for regulated qualifications in Australian education and training. It incorporates the qualifications from each education and training sector into a single comprehensive national qualifications framework.

**AQF qualification**—the result of an accredited complete program of learning leading to formal certification that a graduate has achieved learning outcomes as described in the AQF.

**Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency** —the organisation responsible for the implementation of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme across Australia. Supports the National Health Practitioner Boards (such as the Nursing and Midwifery Board Australia) in implementing the scheme.

**COAG**—the Council of Australian Governments is the peak intergovernmental forum in Australia, comprising the Prime Minister, state premiers, territory chief ministers and the president of the Australian Local Government Association.

**Competence**—the combination of skills, knowledge, attitudes, values and abilities underpinning effective and/or superior performance in a profession or occupational area (from the National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse).

**Competent**—when a person is competent across all the domains of competencies applicable to the nurse or midwife, at a standard judged to be appropriate for the level of nurse being assessed (from the National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse).

**Criteria**—rules or tests on which a judgement or decision in relation to compliance with the Accreditation Standards can be based.

**Curriculum**— the full outline of a program of study, usually built around a conceptual framework with the educational and professional nursing or midwifery philosophies underpinning the curriculum and includes: the philosophy for the program; the program structure and delivery modes; subject outlines; linkages between learning outcomes and their assessment, and national competencies; teaching and learning strategies; and a workplace experience plan.

**Education provider**—university, or other higher education provider, responsible for a *program of study*, the graduates of which are eligible to apply to the NMBA for nursing or midwifery registration or endorsement.

**Entry to practice program** - An NMBA approved three year program of education for entry to the register as a Registered Nurse For registration as a registered nurse, the minimum qualification must be a Bachelor degree (or where relevant, a postgraduate qualification) offered by a university of higher education provider and the minimum length of the course is equivalent to six semesters' full-time study

**Equivalent professional experience**—successful completion of a qualification equivalent to that being taught and sufficient post-graduate professional experience<sup>7</sup> in the discipline being taught to demonstrate competence in applying the discipline's principles and theory.

**Governance**—framework, systems and processes supporting and guiding the organisation towards achieving its goals and the mechanisms by which it, and its people, are held to account. Ethics, risk management, compliance and administration are all elements.

**Graduate competency outcomes**—knowledge, skills, behaviours and attitudes possessed by graduating students in accordance with the National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse.

**Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009 (National Law)**—contained in the Schedule to the Act. This second stage legislation provides for the full operation of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme for health professions from 1 July 2010 and covers the more substantial elements of the national scheme, including registration arrangements, accreditation arrangements, complaints, conduct, health and performance arrangements, and privacy and information-sharing arrangements. The purpose is to protect the public by establishing a national scheme for regulating health practitioners and students undertaking programs of study leading to registration as a health practitioner. The National Law is legislated in each state and territory.

**Higher education provider**—tertiary education provider who meets the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) as prescribed by the *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011* and is currently registered with TEQSA.

**Internationally qualified nurse** – for the purposes of this document an internationally qualified nurse is defined as a registered nurse not registered in Australia but who obtained their nursing qualification(s) and registration in a country outside of Australia.

**National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse**—core competency standards by which performance and professional conduct is assessed to obtain and retain registration as a Registered Nurse.<sup>8</sup>

**NMBA**—the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia is the national regulator of nursing and midwifery professions in Australia. It is established under the Health Practitioner Regulation

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<sup>7</sup> To be read in the context of the *Recency of practice registration standard*, NMBA. Accessed at: <http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/Registration-Standards.aspx> on 19 June 2013.

<sup>8</sup> Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia *Registered Nurse Competency Standards 2006*. Accessed at: <http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/Codes-Guidelines-Statements/Codes-Guidelines.aspx> on 19 June 2013.

National Law, as in force in each state and territory. Its primary role is to protect the public and set standards and policies that all nurses and midwives registered within Australia must meet.

**Office of Best Practice Regulation (OBPR)**—the office administers the Australian Government’s regulatory impact analysis requirements. It has a number of roles, including: assisting agencies in preparing regulation impact statements through training and guidance; monitoring and reporting on the government’s regulatory impact analysis requirements; and administering COAG guidelines for regulation making by national bodies.<sup>9</sup>

**Pharmacodynamics**—the study of the biochemical and physiological effects of drugs and the mechanisms of their action in the body.

**Pharmacokinetics**—the study of the bodily absorption, distribution, metabolism, and excretion of drugs.

**Program or program of study**—the full program of study and experiences that must be completed before a qualification recognised under the AQF, such as a Bachelor or Masters of Nursing, can be awarded.

**Program provider**—school or faculty responsible for the design and delivery of a program of study in nursing leading to the award of a Bachelor Degree in nursing as a minimum.

**Recognition of prior learning**—an assessment process for the students formal and informal learning to determine the extent to which that they have achieved required learning outcomes, competency outcomes or standards for entry to and/or partial or total completion of a qualification.

**Registered nurse (RN)**—a person with appropriate educational preparation and competence for practice, who is registered by the NMBA to practise nursing in Australia.

**Regulatory impact statement (RIS)**—a key component of the Australian Government’s best practice regulation process is a regulation impact statement, containing seven elements setting out:

1. problems or issues that give rise to the need for action
2. desired objectives
3. options that may achieve the desired objectives (at a minimum a regulatory option, a non-regulatory or light-handed regulatory option, and a do-nothing option)
4. assessment of impact (costs, benefits and, where relevant, levels of risk) of options for consumers, business, government and the community
5. consultation
6. recommended option
7. strategy to implement and review the preferred option.

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<sup>9</sup> The role of the OBPR is formally set out in a charter available at: <http://www.finance.gov.au/obpr/about/charter.html>. Accessed on 1 June 2014.

The purpose of a regulatory impact statement is to:

- give decision makers a balanced assessment based on the best available information
- inform interested stakeholders and the community about the likely impact of the proposal and the information decision makers took into account.<sup>10</sup>

**Standard**—level of quality or attainment.

**Subject**—unit of study taught within a program of study.

**Student assessment**—process to determine a student’s achievement of expected learning outcomes. May include written and oral methods and practice or demonstration.

**Workplace experience**—component of nursing education allowing students to use judgement when applying theoretical knowledge in an actual practice setting. Includes the concept of ‘clinical training’ as embodied in the National Law.

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<sup>10</sup> Office of Best Practice Regulation (OBPR) (2013) *Best Practice Regulation Handbook*. Accessed at: <http://www.finance.gov.au/obpr/proposal/handbook/Content/01-productivity-evidence-based-policy.html> on 1 June 2014.