

EXPLANATORY NOTE STUDENTS STUDYING OUTSIDE AUSTRALIA DURING COVID19 PANDEMIC IN 2020

Students studying outside Australia during COVID-19 pandemic in 2020

PURPOSE

This explanatory note supersedes the ANMAC explanatory note entitled 'Students studying outside Australia due to COVID19 pandemic and associated international travel restrictions' published on 25 June 2020.

This explanatory note has been developed in conjunction with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) to help Australian education providers to understand the requirements and responsibilities of permitting students to continue to study an accredited and approved program outside Australia as a consequence of the COVID19 pandemic and associated travel restrictions.

BACKGROUND

ANMAC is responsible for the accreditation and monitoring of all nursing and midwifery education providers and programs of study where graduates are eligible to apply for registration or endorsement with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia.

ANMAC understands the need to support students to continue to undertake selected theoretical components of study during the COVID19 pandemic and associated travel restrictions. Undertaking components of study outside Australia offers students the opportunity to continue with their program and minimises the potential disruption to both students and Education Providers.

There are provisions in both the registered nurse and midwife accreditation standards that can be applied to students studying outside Australia during the COVID 19 pandemic:

- RNAS 2012 standard 4.7 *...learning experiences undertaken outside Australia must not exceed one semester **
- RNAS 2019 standard 3.1 *The program of study is undertaken in Australia. Where there is an offshore component, it is required to:*
 - a) *be no more than one-sixth of the full program completed offshore*
 - b) *demonstrate equivalence of learning outcomes.*
- MAS 2014 standard 4.8 *Equivalence of theory or midwifery practice experience gained outside Australia in terms of subject learning outcomes and assessment. Learning experiences outside Australia must not exceed one-fifth of the total program.*

*The ANMAC explanatory note - *Offshore components in accredited Australian programs of study for registered nurses and midwives* clarifies that for entry to practice registered nurse programs, a semester is the equivalent of one sixth of the program

APPLICATION

This explanatory note only applies to the theoretical components of programs of study that lead to eligibility to apply for registration as a registered nurse or midwife.

The provisions of this explanatory note are only applicable until the end of semester 2 /trimester 3, 2020.

There is no provision for Diploma of Nursing or Nurse Practitioner programs to be undertaken outside of Australia.

RELEVANT DOCUMENTATION

The following documentation is relevant to this explanatory note:

- National Accreditation Guidelines
- ANMAC Midwife Accreditation Standards (2014)
- ANMAC Registered Nurse Accreditation Standards (2019)
- ANMAC Registered Nurse Accreditation Standards (2019) Essential Evidence
- ANMAC Registered Nurse Accreditation Standards (2012)

Education providers should also review relevant documentation published on the TEQSA website in relation to COVID19 regulatory advice on managing online-learning good-practice for students.

ADVICE TO EDUCATION PROVIDERS RE STUDENTS STUDYING OUTSIDE AUSTRALIA DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Education providers can extend a student's online study beyond one semester duration if the total hours of **theoretical study for the individual student** do not exceed one sixth of the registered nurse or one fifth of the midwife entry to practice program. Education providers who use a trimester-based system can use the one sixth rule.

Education providers are able to continue to provide online delivery of theoretical units to students located outside Australia **until the end of semester 2/trimester 3, 2020 only**. All students located outside Australia who were due to either continue with their program or commence their program in Semester 1/trimester 1, 2021 and beyond must postpone their studies until they are able to travel to Australia.

Students can not undertake any professional experience placements while outside Australia. Simulation lab time should be deducted from the theoretical hours as it cannot occur outside Australia.

The head of discipline for nursing and/or midwifery entry to practice programs, where there are students studying outside of Australia, must sign and return a declaration form to ANMAC by **31 July 2020**. The form has already been sent to all relevant education providers. This form outlines ANMAC expectations to ensure that programs remain compliant with the registered nurse and midwife accreditation standards:

I confirm that the following measures are in place to ensure that students studying outside Australia during the COVID 19 pandemic have equivalent opportunity to achieve program outcomes as students studying inside Australia, which include:	
• equivalent academic support is provided	<input type="checkbox"/>
• equivalent assessment requirements and measures to ensure integrity are in place	<input type="checkbox"/>
• equivalent support for and access to Information Technology resources is provided	<input type="checkbox"/>
• a clear communication strategy and decision making pathway has been developed that is informed by Australian Government COVID19 pandemic updates and is communicated with students and academic staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
• a plan has been developed to orientate students commencing their program of study outside Australia in 2020 and upon their arrival to Australia	<input type="checkbox"/>
• a plan has been developed to transition students back into their program of study upon their arrival or return to Australia	<input type="checkbox"/>
• a plan of completion has been developed for students due to complete their program of study in 2020	<input type="checkbox"/>
• pastoral care and support arrangements have been made for students studying outside Australia and upon arriving or returning to Australia.	<input type="checkbox"/>
• students outside of Australia will only be undertaking theoretical components of the program.	<input type="checkbox"/>

ANMAC will monitor the transition plans and progress of students who have been studying outside Australia. Further advice about the required reporting will be provided later in 2020.

Date for Review

30 November 2020

For any queries relating to this explanatory note please contact Margaret Gatling, Director of Accreditation Services margaret.gatling@anmac.org.au