

COMMUNIQUÉ

ASSESSMENT OF DUAL DEGREES

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (ANMAC) became the independent accreditation authority for the nursing and midwifery professions on 1 July 2010 under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme. The role and functions of ANMAC are intended to give the community confidence that nurses and midwives who successfully complete programs accredited by ANMAC are able to practise in a safe and competent manner to achieve quality outcomes for people in their care. A primary function of ANMAC as the accreditation authority for the nursing and midwifery professions is to ensure that programs leading to registration and endorsement of nurses and midwives in Australia, meet the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) approved standards for accreditation.

ANMAC notes the increase in the number of dual degree (Bachelor of Nursing/Bachelor of Midwifery) programs being offered by higher education providers in Australia. These programs require assessment against two sets of Accreditation Standards – those leading to registration as a registered nurse and those leading to registration as a registered midwife. The dual degree leads to the graduate having two discrete qualifications that on registration will enable them to practise in one or both of these professions. This complex assessment of dual degree programs, usually undertaken by an assessment team made up of nursing and midwifery academic and clinical leaders, is significantly different from the accreditation assessment where the application is for a single program leading to a single qualification and registration by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia in only one category of registration. Therefore ANMAC provides the following information in relation to the assessment of dual degrees to education providers planning to seek accreditation for the dual degree in both nursing and midwifery:

- **Time Taken for Review of Submission:** The ANMAC *National Guidelines for the Accreditation of Nursing and Midwifery Programs Leading to Registration and Endorsement in Australia* outline the features and stages of the ANMAC Accreditation Scheme. The Guidelines note that the accreditation of new programs may take up to nine (9) months to complete for a stand-alone program. This time frame does **not** apply to the assessment of dual degrees (programs leading to registration as a registered nurse and a registered midwife). The Assessment of a dual degree requires review by the assessment team members against both sets of Accreditation Standards and then consideration by both the Registered Nurse Accreditation Committee and the Registered Midwife Accreditation Committee.
- **Length of Program for a Dual Degree:** While ANMAC does not state a definitive length of program for a dual degree education providers wishing to offer a dual degree must refer to the individual requirements for entry to practice nursing AND midwifery programs as stated

in the *Standards and Criteria for the Accreditation of Nursing and Midwifery Courses Leading to Registration, Enrolment, Endorsement and Authorisation in Australia – with Evidence Guide* for requirements on course length and structure. Education Providers must also conform to the *Australian Qualifications Framework specification for the Bachelor Degree* for each degree offered, as part of the dual degree must equip graduates with the national competencies required of registered nurses AND registered midwives.

For further information please visit:

[http://www.anmac.org.au/userfiles/file/ANMC_Registered_Nurse\(1\).pdf](http://www.anmac.org.au/userfiles/file/ANMC_Registered_Nurse(1).pdf)

<http://www.anmac.org.au/userfiles/file/AccreditationDocumentsfortheWebsite/15110ANMCAccreditationStandardsMidwivesRevisedNovember2010.pdf>

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