

EXPLANATORY NOTE

GOVERNANCE OF RE-ENTRY TO THE REGISTER NURSING AND MIDWIFERY PROGRAMS AND ENTRY PROGRAMS FOR INTERNATIONALLY QUALIFIED REGISTERED NURSES

PURPOSE

This explanatory note has been developed to assist Australian education providers prepare an ANMAC application when seeking accreditation of Re-entry to the register nursing and midwifery programs or Entry programs for internationally qualified registered nurses (EPIQ RN).

BACKGROUND

ANMAC is responsible for the accreditation of all nursing and midwifery education providers and programs of study where graduates are eligible to apply for registration or endorsement in Australia. Re-entry to the register nursing and midwifery programs and EPIQ RN provide another pathway to Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) registration. Consequently, such programs are required to be accredited by ANMAC to ensure compliance with the relevant ANMAC accreditation standards. Programs accredited by ANMAC and approved by the NMBA, are published on the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency's [Approved Programs of Study List](#).

APPLICATION

The aim of this explanatory note is to support education providers in operationalising ANMAC's accreditation standards and criteria relevant to the governance of Re-entry to the register nursing and midwifery programs and/or EPIQ RN.

Note: This explanatory note does not apply to education providers seeking accreditation for:

- entry to practice nursing and midwifery programs of study
- re-entry to the register enrolled nurse programs of study.¹

¹ Content within the [ANMC Standards and Criteria for the Accreditation of Nursing and Midwifery Courses: Re-entry to the Register Standards Enrolled Nurses, May 2010](#)¹ is currently different to corresponding ANMAC accreditation standards. Future review of the ANMC accreditation standards is planned and revisions will likely bring these standards into alignment with existing ANMAC re-entry to the register accreditation standards.

However, these education providers must demonstrate compliance with all accreditation standards relevant to seeking accreditation of entry to practice nursing and midwifery programs and a re-entry to the register enrolled nurse program.

RELEVANT DOCUMENTATION

The following documents are relevant to this explanatory note:

- ANMAC Re-entry to the Register – Registered Nurse Accreditation Standards 2014
- ANMAC Entry Programs for Internationally Qualified – Registered Nurse Accreditation Standards 2014
- ANMAC Re-entry to the Register – Midwife Accreditation Standards 2016
- ANMAC EPIQ Registered Nurse Application Pack 2014
- ANMAC Re-entry Registered Nurse Application Pack 2014
- ANMAC Re-entry Midwife Application Pack 2016
- Other ANMAC [explanatory notes](#).

Education providers should also review relevant documentation published by the:

- [Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency \(TEQSA\)](#) or [Australian Skills Quality Authority \(ASQA\)](#) relating to third party arrangements or delivery with other parties
- NMBA relating to [re-entry to practice](#) or [internationally qualified nurses and midwives entry to the register](#)
- [Australian Qualifications Framework](#) relating to criteria for Level 7 Bachelor Degree and responsibilities of qualification developers and issuing organisations.

STANDARD ONE: GOVERNANCE – CRITERIA 1.1, 1.3 and 1.4

The Re-entry to the Register – Registered Nurse Accreditation Standards 2014 require education providers to demonstrate evidence of:

1.1 Current registration with one of the following:

- a. TEQSA as an Australian university or other higher education provider² offering an entry to practice registered nurse program.³
- b. 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. ASQA as an Australian registered training organisation (RTO) that has a formal governance arrangement in place with an Australian university or other higher education provider, which has current registration with TEQSA and offers an entry to practice registered nurse program.

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

³ 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 of full-time study.

1.3 Meeting the AQF requirements for a minimum level 7 award program, and having been issued with a statement of completion and/or 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 illustrates academic oversight of the Re-entry to the Register—Registered Nurse program and promotes high-quality teaching and learning, scholarship, research and ongoing evaluation.

These criteria are the same in the EPIQ RN Accreditation Standards 2014.⁴

These criteria in the Re-entry to the Register – Midwife Accreditation Standards 2014 have similar wording; however, an additional footnote is included that states:

Formal agreement refers to a formal contract that details the roles and responsibilities of each of the education providers in the program’s governance, design, delivery, resourcing and quality and risk management, as well as in student support, student assessment and management of midwifery practice experience.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

The following sections provides a brief outline of evidence requirements for criteria 1.1a, b and c, 1.3 and 1.4 as stated in ANMAC’s Re-entry to the register and EPIQ RN accreditation standards.

SUB-CRITERION 1.1a

A University or higher education provider that currently offers an entry to practice program is required to submit evidence that:

- the currently offered entry to practice program is NMBA approved
- the education provider holds current registration with TEQSA.

This same evidence requirements exist for education providers seeking accreditation of EPIQ RN programs.

SUB-CRITERIA 1.1b and c

These sub-criteria afford RTOs, Australian Universities or higher education providers that do not offer an entry to practice nursing or midwifery program, an opportunity to provide Re-entry to the Register and/or an EPIQ RN programs. This is made possible by requiring such education providers to have in place a formal agreement with a TEQSA registered Australian University or higher education provider that currently offers a NMBA approved entry to practice program (specific to the nursing or midwifery profession, as applicable).

To allow for flexible and innovative arrangements between parties ANMAC has purposefully avoided being overly prescriptive about the content of a formal agreement.

The education provider applying for accreditation of a Re-entry to the register or EPIQ RN program is required to submit evidence of:

- current registration with TEQSA or ASQA
- a formal contract that:

⁴ NB: In the Re-entry to the register – RN and EPIQ RN standards, it is implicit that the entry to practice program being offered is ANMAC accredited and NMBA approved.

- is current – dated and bearing the signatures of both education providers
- details each party’s roles and responsibilities, with attention given to how:
 - responsibilities assigned to the education provider with experience in offering an approved entry to practice program enables oversight of the Re-entry to the register or EPIQ RN program’s governance, design, delivery, resourcing, quality and risk management, student supports, student assessments and management of professional practice experience
 - governance responsibilities assigned to the TEQSA registered education provider enables oversight of the RTO’s provision of the Re-entry to the register or EPIQ RN program so that it is consistent with a standard expected by TEQSA⁵ (Refer also to criterion 1.3)
 - the responsibility for assessing students against the nursing or midwifery profession’s (as applicable) standards for practice rests with registered nurses or midwives (as applicable) experienced in performing this assessment.

Criterion 1.3

Australian universities and higher education providers offering a Re-entry to the register or EPIQ RN are required to submit evidence that the program’s learning outcomes and assessments enable students’ level of attainment to reflect, as a minimum, AQF level 7.

An RTO offering a Re-entry to the register or EPIQ RN program is required to provide this same evidence noted in the above paragraph. In addition, the RTO is required to demonstrate that the Australian university or higher education provider, with which they have a formal governance agreement, has:

- provided oversight of the program’s learning outcomes and assessments to ensure students’ level of attainment reflects, as a minimum, AQF level 7
- issued program graduates with a graduate statement i.e. a statement of completion or attainment.

Consequently, formal governance agreements with RTOs need to stipulate the Australian university or higher education provider is responsible for:

- providing oversight of the program’s learning outcomes and assessments to ensure students’ level of attainment reflects, as a minimum, AQF level 7
- authenticating and verifying a graduate’s statement of completion / attainment as the issuing organisation.

Criteria 1.4

Education providers are required to provide documentation that:

- identifies the academic governance structure for the Re-entry to the register or EPIQ RN program
- incorporates diagrammatic representation of the academic governance structure e.g. documented organisational chart

⁵ Refer to Australian Government, *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015*, viewed at <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2015L01639> on the 29 January 2018.

- clarifies how oversight of the program is conducted, including the roles and responsibilities, communication and reporting lines of persons, committee or parties within the academic governance structure
- identifies how promotion of high-quality teaching and learning, scholarship, research and ongoing evaluation falls within the roles and responsibilities of persons, committees or parties within the governance structure.

Where a formal agreement with another education provider exists, the role of each education provider in program governance should be explained. A flow chart can assist in clarifying how a governance relationship between education providers is operationalised.

RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The education provider seeking accreditation and who has entered into a formal agreement with another party, is advised to have in place a risk management framework for the Re-entry to the register or EPIQ RN that clearly articulates processes for assessing and ensuring:

- the safety of students and health service consumers during professional practice experience
- that program provision enables students to achieve learning outcomes at the required AQF level
- Education provider's roles and responsibilities are met, enabling provision of the program at a standard expected by TEQSA.

Table 1: Table of amendments

Version number	Date	Short description of amendment

Date April 2018

Responsible Director

Director of Accreditation Services