

## 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.

ANMAC 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 graduates achieve 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 Midwife 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 Midwife Accreditation Standards 2021 replace the Midwife Accreditation Standards 2014.

## What are the main changes to the Midwife Accreditation Standards 2021?

The Midwife Accreditation Standards 2021 have moved to a five-standard format. The structure of the revised accreditation standards is described in Table 1. An extensive mapping exercise was undertaken to ensure content from the Midwife Accreditation Standards 2014 was included in the Midwife Accreditation Standards 2021. An Essential Evidence companion document has been prepared with the accreditation standards, to assist with the move to the five-standard format.

**Table 1: Comparison of 2014 and 2021 standard structure**

STANDARD NUMBER	2014 STANDARDS STRUCTURE	2021 STANDARDS STRUCTURE
Standard 1	Governance	Safety of the public
Standard 2	Curriculum conceptual framework	Governance
Standard 3	Program development and structure	Program of Study
Standard 4	Program content	Student experience
Standard 5	Student assessment	Student assessment
Standard 6	Students	
Standard 7	Resources	
Standard 8	Management of midwifery practice experience	
Standard 9	Quality improvement and risk management	

Several qualitative changes have been integrated across the Midwife Accreditation Standards 2021. Key changes include demonstration of the following:

- 1.3 The program's admission requirements are fair, equitable and transparent. Before making an offer for enrolment, education providers inform applicants of the requirements to:
  - b. demonstrate English language proficiency either by providing a written declaration that English is their primary language or evidence that they have achieved the minimum English language test results.
- 1.4 The education provider ensures that midwifery settings in which students undertake midwifery practice experience<sup>1</sup> (MPE) have:
  - a. evidence-based quality and safety policies and processes that meet relevant jurisdictional requirements and standards
  - b. midwives who are prepared for the supervisory role and are able to supervise and assess students during all MPE
  - c. relevant registered health practitioners available for collaborative teaching and learning opportunities in interprofessional settings.
- 1.5 Students are registered with the NMBA before starting their first Professional Experience Placement (PEP).
- 1.7 Program progression policies and rules ensure that only students who have demonstrated the requisite knowledge and skills required for safe practice are eligible for PEP.
- 2.2 The education provider conducting the program has a governance structure that recognises the autonomous identity of the profession of midwifery. The structure facilitates the direct input of the discipline lead of midwifery (or delegate) into committees and processes directly or indirectly impacting on the midwifery program.
- 2.4 All program entry pathways for which students receive block credit or advanced standing (other than on an individual basis) are identified, approved by ANMAC and allow graduates to meet the NMBA Midwife standards for practice.

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to glossary for an operational definition of midwifery practice experience.

- 2.5 The program's quality improvement mechanisms incorporate evaluation information from a variety of sources and address:
  - d. evidence-based developments in:
    - i. midwifery professional education
    - ii. health professional education
    - iii. health and health care
- 3.5 The program's content and subject learning outcomes ensure:
  - d. digital health and emerging technologies
  - e. integrated knowledge of care across the childbearing continuum within the scope of midwifery practice including:
    - i. social and emotional wellbeing of women
    - ii. complex family health, domestic and family violence, stillbirth and bereavement care
    - iii. perinatal mental health
  - f. understanding self-care, mitigating personal risk and resilience
  - g. equivalence in all delivery modes in which the program is offered.
- 3.6 The program's content and subject learning outcomes support the development of knowledge and skills in pharmacotherapeutics and quality use of medicines.
- 4.3 Students are informed of, and have access to, grievance and appeals processes.
- 4.6 Student experiences have equity and diversity principles observed and promoted.
- 5.5 The integrity of the program's theoretical and clinical assessments is ensured through the use of contemporary, validated assessment tools, modes of assessment, sampling, and moderation processes.

Key changes to terminology used in the standard include the adoption of Midwifery Practice Experience (MPE) instead of midwifery practice experience placement.

## **What is the Essential Evidence companion document?**

In collaboration with stakeholders, ANMAC has developed an Essential Evidence companion document to support the standards. The companion document is given to education providers with the Midwife Accreditation Standards 2021. It provides information to education providers about the minimum evidence they need to submit to demonstrate that their program of study meets these standards. Education providers applying for program accreditation are required to provide all essential evidence in conjunction with their Midwife Accreditation Standards 2021 Application Pack.

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

In developing an accreditation standard for a health profession, *the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009* requires accreditation authorities to undertake wide-ranging consultation on the content of accreditation standards.

The review of the Midwife Accreditation Standards 2021 was guided by a Professional Reference Group (PRG) selected for expertise in consumer advocacy; midwifery practice, education and research; health service delivery and management; regulation and accreditation; professional and industrial matters and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. The PRG 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 online surveys accessible during three periods of public consultation.

Stakeholder submissions and ANMAC feedback synthesis documents are accessible via the archived consultation links on the ANMAC website.

### **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 Midwife Accreditation Standards 2021, ANMAC 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 Midwife Accreditation Standards 2021 come into effect?**

The Midwife Accreditation Standards 2021 are effective from 29 January 2021. This is the date the accreditation standards were published by ANMAC after receiving approval from the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia on 18 December 2021.

### **Are previous accreditation standards for Midwife programs still valid?**

Previously, Bachelor of Midwifery, Master of Midwifery or Graduate Diploma of Midwifery programs were accredited against the Midwife Accreditation Standards 2014. Those standards will continue to be used to monitor and assess changes to programs that were accredited against the 2014 version of the standards.

### **How do the Midwife Accreditation Standards 2021 affect education providers with a currently accredited program?**

In line with ANMAC's [Transition policy for new Accreditation Standards](#), ANMAC has determined there will be one area of change that will require education providers to transition to the new accreditation standards. Education providers will be provided with information regarding the transition requirements, evidence required and due dates.

All future applications for the accreditation of Bachelor of Midwifery, Master of Midwifery or Graduate Diploma of Midwifery programs will need to address the Midwife Accreditation Standards 2021.

### **How do the Midwife Accreditation Standards 2021 affect education providers planning to run a Bachelor of Midwifery, Master of Midwifery or Graduate Diploma of Midwifery program in the future?**

From 29 January 2021, all education providers submitting a Bachelor of Midwifery, Master of Midwifery or Graduate Diploma of Midwifery program to ANMAC for accreditation will need to address the Midwife Accreditation Standards 2021. Information on the requirements for submissions are contained in the Midwife Accreditation Standards 2021 Application pack.

Please email [accreditation@anmac.org.au](mailto:accreditation@anmac.org.au) to discuss your planned application.

## **How do the Midwife Accreditation Standards 2021 affect students currently enrolled in a Bachelor of Midwifery, Master of Midwifery or Graduate Diploma of Midwifery 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 Midwife Accreditation Standards 2021?**

Further information on the Midwife Accreditation Standards 2021 is available on the [ANMAC website](#).

Education providers should direct all questions to the [accreditation@anmac.org.au](mailto:accreditation@anmac.org.au) or phone 02 6274 9166.

Accreditation Services

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