



Fact Sheet

October 2013

Guide for submitting an *Application for registration for re-entry to practice*

About recency of practice

The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (National Board or NMBA) undertakes functions as set by the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory ([National Law](#)). The National Board regulates the practice of nursing and midwifery in Australia, and one of its key roles is to protect the public by ensuring that only nurses and midwives who are suitably qualified to practice in a competent and ethical manner are registered.

Under the National Law, there is a mandatory requirement for applicants for registration and renewal of registration to meet the National Board's requirements in relation to the nature, extent, period and recency of any previous practice.

In order to become registered, nurses and/or midwives have to meet the National Board's mandatory registration standards. Registered nurses and/or midwives are expected to practice within the relevant competency standards and decision-making frameworks.

The introduction of the National Board *Recency of practice registration standard* (the Standard) established national recency of practice requirements for nurses and/or midwives. The Standard requires that a nurse and/or midwife (when seeking registration, endorsement of registration or renewal of registration) must have undertaken sufficient practice to demonstrate competence in their profession/s within the preceding five years.

Nursing and midwifery practice is constantly evolving, and it is vital that previously registered nurses and/or midwives seeking to re-enter practice are competent and safe to provide nursing and/or midwifery care.

For an individual who is both a nurse and midwife, it means that they have recent experience practising **both** professions and that their nursing **and** midwifery skills are current and up to date.

'Recency of practice' means that a nurse and/or midwife has recent experience practising their profession and that their nursing and/or midwifery skills are current and up to date.

As outlined in the Standard a nurse and/or midwife who seeks to return to practice after a break of more than five years must satisfactorily complete a program or assessment process that is approved by the National Board.

Individuals who do not meet the *Recency of practice registration standard* and wish to return to practice are required to apply for provisional registration before engaging in any form of practice, supervised or otherwise, so that this assessment can occur.

Nursing and midwifery standards are published on the National Board's website at www.nursingandmidwifery.gov.au.

Who this fact sheet applies to

This fact sheet has been prepared to:

- give nursing and/or midwifery registrants and previously registered individuals further details about the National Board's recency of practice requirements and re-entry to practice policy, and
- explain the process involved in applying to re-enter the profession.

This document must be read in conjunction with the *Recency of practice registration standard* and the *Re-entry to practice policy*¹.

The Standard and process outlined in this document specifically applies to nurses and/or midwives (whether they are registered or not) who have not practiced in the last five years or longer.

Type of situations that may require an application for provisional registration for the purpose of re-entry to practice

Each application for renewal of registration requires nurses and/or midwives to make a declaration about their practice in the last five years. All nurses and midwives must make the declaration.

In relation to re-entry to practice, the following groups of health professionals need to evaluate their knowledge and skills to make sure they have the education, training, experience and competence before applying for provisional registration:

1. **Returning to practice after a period of absence** - if the absence has been for:
 - *less than five years*, it is the individual's professional responsibility to undertake an evaluation of their readiness to re-enter practice, or
 - *five years or more*, the individual needs to advise the relevant state or territory board or registration committee of the NMBA using the process outlined below.
2. **Changing from non-practising registration** to a registration type that permits practice. If an individual is registered in the non-practising category, they need to advise the relevant state or territory board or registration committee of the NMBA using the process outlined below. If a non-practising registrant meets the *Recency of practice registration standard*, they can directly apply for general registration.
3. **Changing from general registration to provisional registration.** Provisional registration is an option where a registrant has been unable to undertake sufficient practice as defined in the Standard in the preceding five years to maintain competence, and where they wish to later be eligible for general registration in a defined period.

About provisional registration

Provisional registration is a registration type described in the National Law. This registration type enables an individual to complete a period of supervised practice, program or requisite studies that supports the person's eligibility for general registration.

How to apply

Nurses and/or midwives who have been out of practice for five years or more need to give the relevant state or territory board or registration committee of the NMBA sufficient information to enable it to review the individuals requirements to re-enter practice.

¹ Registration standards, codes and guidelines are located at www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au.

The relevant state or territory board or registration committee of the NMBA must be satisfied that the nurse or midwife is safe and competent to practice the profession in Australia.

Each application is decided on its merits. The documentation and application forms allow for a standard set of information to be collected, allowing the relevant state or territory board or registration committee of the NMBA to evaluate the applicant's specific circumstance.

Nurses or midwives seeking to re-enter practice are required to complete the following documentation and submit it to the relevant state or territory board or registration committee of the NMBA for assessment:

1. **Application form for provisional registration** – attaching all requested information.
 - The form gathers information about an applicant's qualifications, work and registration history, professional development activities, plans for future professional practice and length of time away from practising in the profession/s.
 - The information collected will guide the relevant state or territory board or registration committee of the NMBA to evaluate any additional training, periods of supervision, programs or other requirements necessary to meet eligibility for general registration.
2. **Recency of practice/Return to practice Self Assessment Questionnaire**
 - In completing the questionnaire, applicants reflect on and evaluate their preparedness to re-enter practice.
 - The Questionnaire provides an opportunity for the applicant to reflect on any gaps or deficits in knowledge, skills or competence and to assess their readiness to re-enter practice.
 - There is an individually tailored questionnaire for enrolled nurses, registered nurses and midwives which relates to the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia 'National competency standards'² for that profession.

Optional documentation at the time of application

On occasion, an individual may already have obtained a current supervised practice opportunity. Under such circumstances, the individual must submit evidence of this offer and a completed copy of the *Supervised practice agreement* during the application phase³.

- Evidence of employment/Supervised practice position (optional)
- Supervised practice agreement (optional)

How applications are processed

The relevant state or territory board or registration committee of the NMBA will assess the completed application form and supporting documents.

A range of factors are considered when assessing what is needed for the nurse or midwife to re-enter practice, including qualifications, professional practice history and length of time away from practicing the profession. Further information regarding the assessment of applications is available in the

² Competency standards are located under [Codes and guidelines](#) on the National Board website.

³ Evidence of employment and completed supervision agreements are not required for application assessment to occur and have no bearing on the relevant state or territory Board or registration committee of the NMBA's decision making

[Principles for assessing nursing and midwifery applicants for re-entry to practice document](#) on the National Board website

The relevant state or territory board or registration committee of the NMBA may require:

- additional information or documentation from the nurse or midwife, or
- the applicant to attend in person before the relevant state or territory board or registration committee of the NMBA .

Likely application outcomes

Each applicant seeking re-entry to practice is individually considered by the relevant state or territory board or registration committee of the NMBA.

The National Board has the power to grant all registration types under the National Law. The National Board also has the power to refuse registration to individuals based on the assessment of their application against the Registration Standards.

After documentation is considered, the National Board may decide to grant provisional registration. In this case, the applicant may be required to complete any one of the following:

- A Board-approved period of supervised practice (**Pathway 1**)
- A Board-approved re-entry to practice program (**Pathway 2**), or
- Requisite studies in a re-entry to practice pathway within a Board-approved entry to practice program of study leading to initial registration, as identified by a Board-approved education provider following recognition of the individual's prior learning (**Pathway 3**).

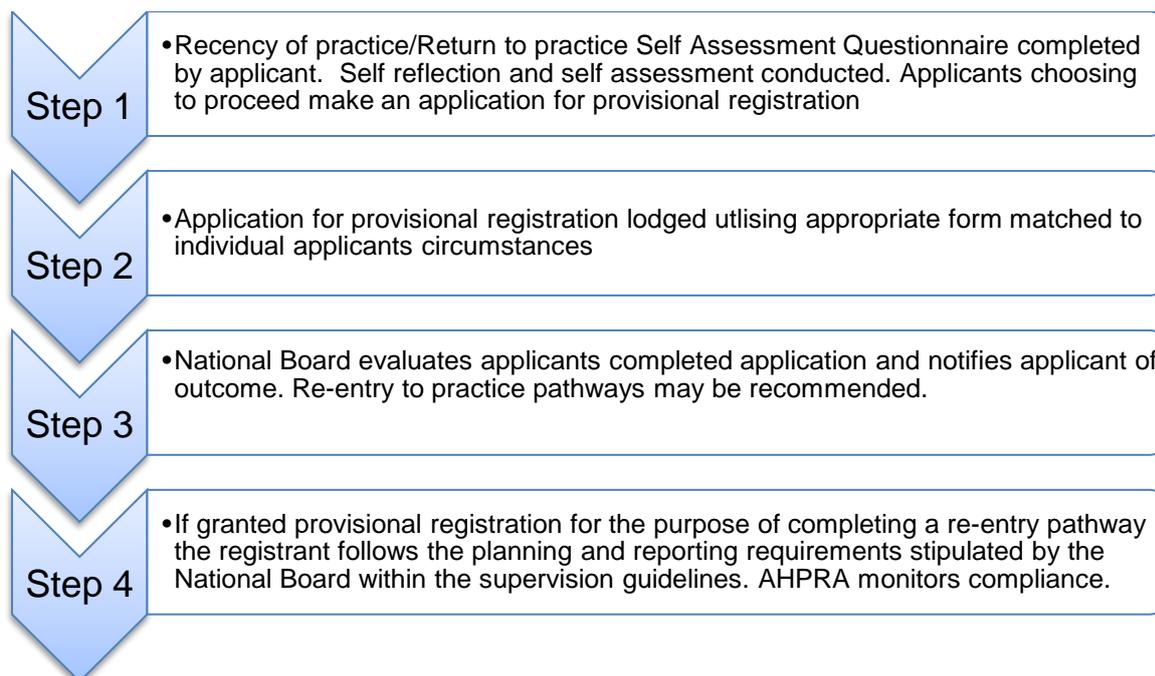
Individuals must be granted provisional registration before and for the duration of their program, placement or course. In granting provisional registration, the relevant state or territory board or registration committee of the NMBA also stipulates the level of supervision in which the registrant will practice within.

Individuals with provisional registration are required to review the *Supervision guidelines for nursing and midwifery*. Within the guidelines, registrants are directed to submit the following to the relevant state or territory board or registration committee of the NMBA:

- Contract/Acceptance letter of required program, before commencing
- Supervised Practice Agreement, before practice commencing
- Supervised Practice Plan, within 14 days of commencing practice
- Formative Reports, as listed in the supervision guidelines⁴
- Summative Report, as listed in the supervision guidelines.

⁴ Registrants completing an NMBA approved re-entry to practice program (Pathway 2), listed as an [approved program of study](#) are not required to complete a formative report unless specifically requested to do so by the Board or other entity, including the education provider.

Overview of the process



Likely outcome for an individual who has not practiced for 10 years or more

An individual who has not practiced for ten years or more will usually not be considered for Pathway 1 & 2. Based upon individual assessment the relevant state or territory board or registration committee of the NMBA, applicants may need to complete requisite studies in a re-entry to practice pathway. This pathway needs to be within a Board-approved entry to practice program of study leading to initial registration, as identified by a Board-approved education provider (following recognition of the individual's prior learning).

Where to submit your application information

Send all documentation to the AHPRA office in your capital city as listed in the [contact us](#) section of the AHPRA website (www.ahpra.gov.au)

AHPRA Nursing & Midwifery Registrations GPO Box 9958 In your capital city (refer below)		You may contact the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency on 1300 419 495 or you can lodge an enquiry at www.ahpra.gov.au	
Sydney NSW 2001	Canberra ACT 2601	Melbourne VIC 3001	Brisbane QLD 4001
Adelaide SA 5001	Perth WA 6001	Hobart TAS 7001	Darwin NT 0801

For information on the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia refer to the website: www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au