

Fact sheet for internationally qualified nurses with qualifications solely in mental health, disability or paediatric nursing

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Information about the assessment model for the qualifications of *Internationally qualified nurses and midwives* is published on the [NMBA website](#).

This is important information for internationally qualified nurses with qualifications solely in mental health, disability or paediatric nursing.

Definitions

AQF – Australian Qualification Framework

NMBA – Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia

Notations for nurses with sole qualifications

1. How are nurses with qualifications solely in mental health, disability or paediatric nursing registered in Australia?

Depending on their area of qualification, nurses with these qualifications are registered with a notation stating that they are 'solely qualified in the area of mental health nursing or paediatric nursing or disability nursing'. Qualifications solely in mental health, disability or paediatric nursing can only be obtained internationally, as there are no programs of study approved in Australia for nurses to gain these types of qualifications.

2. Are there any other specific areas of nursing that receive a notation in Australia?

No, Australia only recognises the areas of mental health, paediatric and disability nursing. Any other areas of qualification outside of Australia, such as adult nursing, are considered part of general nursing in Australia.

3. Will a notation reflect badly on my professional status?

No, a notation is not an indication of any concern about your performance or ability as a nurse. Notations are used to provide relevant information to employers and the public on an individual's registration status.

Registration of nurses with qualifications solely in mental health, disability or paediatric nursing

4. How do I qualify for registration as a registered nurse with a qualification solely in mental health, disability or paediatric nursing?

The NMBA assesses all registered nurses against the [three qualification criteria for registered nurses](#). In order to be eligible for registration, applicants must meet all three criteria, as well as all registration standards listed on the application form, such as recency of practice and English language skills. Criterion 3 requires that your qualification must be assessed as being equivalent to an Australian Bachelor degree (AQF level 7).

5. What happens if my qualification is assessed at AQF level 6?

Registered nurses with qualifications solely in mental health, disability or paediatric nursing at AQF level 6 will be registered with conditions for 12 months full time equivalent supervised practice. The NMBA has decided that this is an appropriate pathway to assess the applicant's eligibility for registration. On successful completion of the supervised practice, the condition will be removed.

Supervised practice

6. What does supervised practice mean?

When the NMBA imposes conditions requiring supervised practice on your registration, it means that you must work under supervision, as agreed with the NMBA. Requirements are tailored to the purpose of supervision.

7. Why are supervised practice conditions necessary for my registration?

Where you do not meet all requirements for general registration, supervised practice is to help assure the NMBA of your competence. Patients have a right to expect safe, competent and contemporary nursing care at all times. This includes when care is given under supervisory arrangements. Correct supervision reassures the NMBA and the community that a nurse's practice is safe and does not place the public at risk.

8. Do I need to arrange my own supervised practice?

Yes, you are responsible for making sure that your employer meets the NMBA's requirements for supervised practice. Supervised practice must take place in a health service that provides clinical experience placements for students completing a NMBA-approved program of study leading to registration as a nurse.

9. What specific conditions for supervised practice can I expect on my registration?

The NMBA can decide to impose whatever conditions it considers necessary or desirable for your particular circumstances. It is likely that your registration will be subject to conditions that will require you to demonstrate competence to practise as a registered nurse against the [Registered nurse standards for practice](#). These are the standards that provide the minimum expectation of practice for a registered nurse and they inform the education standards for registered nurses in Australia.

Other requirements that may be included in your conditions include:

- To undertake supervised practice for a period of 12 months full-time equivalent.
- To work only in a health service that provides clinical experience placements for education providers delivering NMBA-approved programs of study leading to registration as a registered nurse. You will not be able to operate in private practice or work through an agency.
- To provide the NMBA with a supervised practice plan and supervision agreement that you have agreed and completed with your supervisor.

Please note that the conditions listed above are a general list and your specific conditions may differ at the NMBA's discretion.

If supervised practice conditions are imposed on your registration, your supervisor will be required to submit a report at the end of the supervision period assessing your performance against the NMBA's *Registered nurse standards for practice*.

10. What will the conditions on my registration state?

Your registration will include the schedule of supervised practice conditions for registered nurses with qualifications solely in mental health, disability or paediatric nursing.

Current conditions on your registration will be visible on the [national register](#).

11. Do I need to start my supervised practice immediately after being registered?

No, there is no required start date for employment with supervised practice. However, you will need to make sure you can meet the recency of practice and continuing professional development [Registration Standards](#) when you renew your registration. Registration expires on 31 May of every year.

12. How long must I work under supervision?

Internationally qualified registered nurses with AQF level 6 qualifications solely in mental health, disability or paediatric nursing are generally registered with conditions for 12 months full time equivalent supervised practice.

'Full-time equivalent' represents average hours over a specified period which is equal to that of a full-time employee or student. Full-time equivalent hours are defined as 37.5 hours per week or 150 hours per month. Over a 12 month period this means you will need to work 1,800 hours of supervised practice.

If you are working full-time, you must undertake supervised practice for 12 months, with a minimum of 150 hours worked per month.

If you are working part-time, you must undertake supervised practice for as long as it takes you to complete the required 1,800 hours.

13. Who is going to pay if there are costs involved in fulfilling conditions on my registration?

You are responsible for paying any costs associated with any NMBA-approved conditions on your registration.

14. Will the conditions on my registration impact on my ability to find employment?

You will be limited to employment in health settings that currently provide clinical experience placements for education providers delivering NMBA-approved programs of study leading to registration as a registered nurse. Many public and private hospitals meet these requirements.

15. Can I do supervised practice in a private hospital or with a private agency?

The supervised practice must be in a health setting that provides clinical experience placements for education providers delivering pre-registration NMBA-approved programs. Many private hospitals meet this requirement, but you will not be able to work for a private agency.

16. Can any health professional supervise my practice?

Your supervisor must be a registered nurse who has a minimum of 24 months full-time equivalent experience and no conditions on their registration as a registered nurse. You can have more than one supervisor, but they must all meet these requirements.

17. Does supervised practice mean I have to be directly supervised at all times?

Supervision can be direct or indirect. The level of supervision required will be determined initially by the NMBA and by your supervisor(s) during your supervised practice. Your level of supervision will depend on your past experience and your performance in the workplace. For more information on the levels of supervision read the [supervision guidelines](#).

18. What happens with the conditions on my registration when I renew registration?

If annual renewal of your registration arises before you have completed your supervised practice, we will renew your registration with the same conditions.

19. Must I tell my employer/s of the conditions on my registration?

Yes, you need to inform your employer/s of your conditions and provide a copy of the conditions with your employer's signature to the NMBA within the term specified on the conditions.

20. What happens if I change employment during my period of supervised practice?

You will need to inform your new employer of your conditions and provide a copy of the conditions with your new employer's signature to the NMBA within the term specified on the conditions. You will also need a new supervisor who works for your new employer.

21. How will you know that I have met the conditions on my registration?

The NMBA will determine its assessment based on your supervisor's assessment report when you complete the period of supervised practice.

22. Is there a way to avoid supervised practice?

If you do not wish to do supervised practice you will need to upgrade your qualification to a Bachelor degree nursing qualification (assessed at AQF level 7) in your country of origin or in Australia.

In Australia, you would do this by enrolling in a NMBA-approved pre-registration program leading to registration as a registered nurse, such as a Bachelor of Nursing. You may seek advanced standing for previous study (Recognition of Prior Learning, or RPL). The decision to recognise prior learning is made by the education provider and the NMBA does not influence this decision.

23. Will my employer incur any costs as a result of my supervised practice?

There will be a resource commitment required by your employer to provide your supervision. You would need to negotiate this with your employer.

24. Is there a toolkit to help me complete necessary documentation for my supervised practice?

Yes, the NMBA has published [templates and guidelines](#) to help you complete the documentation you need during your supervised practice. These are:

- IQNM Board supervision agreement
- IQNM Supervision guidelines
- Supervised practice plan (registered nurse)
- Supervisor summative report (registered nurse)

25. Where do I get more information?

- Information about the assessment model is published on the NMBA website under Registration and endorsement > [Internationally qualified nurses and midwives](#).
- For registration enquiries: 1300 419 495 (within Australia) +61 3 8708 9001 (overseas callers)
- For more information on the requirements for internationally qualified nurses and midwives: visit the [Internationally qualified nurses and midwives page](#) of the NMBA website.
- [Application form for internationally qualified nurses and midwives](#)
- [Approved programs of study](#)
- [Australian Qualifications Framework](#)