

Information for nursing and midwifery applicants

Updated March 2019

How to provide the evidence requirements for the NMBA English language skills registration standard

This document explains how to provide evidence for the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) *English language skills registration standard (2019)* (ELS standard (2019)).

Background

To practise safely in Australia, health practitioners, including nurses and midwives, must have strong English language skills. This includes being able to communicate effectively with patients and their relatives, collaborate with other health care professionals and keep clear and accurate health records. The English language standards set by the National Boards help to ensure that everyone who registers as a health practitioner in Australia possesses these skills, regardless of their language or educational backgrounds.

The NMBA ELS standard (2019) provides pathways for applicants to demonstrate that they have the necessary English language skills to meet the standard and safely practice in Australia.

This guide sets out the evidence requirements for each of the pathways.

It is important that you provide accurate information. You will need to sign a declaration on the application form that the information you provide is true and correct, including the information you provide about your English language skills. A false statement may be grounds for the NMBA to refuse registration or take further action if necessary.

Evidence requirements for each pathway

1. Primary language pathway

English is your **primary language** and:

- a. you have attended and satisfactorily completed at least six years of **primary** and **secondary education** taught and assessed in English in one of the **recognised countries**, including at least two years between years 7 and 12, and
- b. your qualification in the relevant professional discipline, which you are relying on to support your eligibility for registration under the **National Law** was taught and assessed solely in English in one of the **recognised countries** and:
 - i. in the case of a registered nurse or registered midwife, you must provide evidence of at least a two (2) years full-time equivalent pre-registration program of study approved by the recognised nursing and/or midwifery regulatory body in any of the recognised countries.
 - ii. in the case of an enrolled nurse, you must provide evidence of at least a one year full-time equivalent pre-registration program of study approved by the recognised nursing and/or midwifery regulatory body in any of the recognised countries listed in this registration standard.

If you are using this pathway, English must be your primary language. This means that English must be the language you primarily use for reading, writing, listening and speaking and the language you know best and are most comfortable with.

For part (a), complete the table in the application form listing details of any relevant **primary and secondary education** that you have successfully completed. A sample table is attached. For part (b), if your qualification is not an **Board approved program of study**, you must provide confirmation that the course was taught and assessed solely in English by providing a certified copy of a transcript.

If your transcript does not show that the program of study was taught and assessed solely in English, including the clinical aspects of the program involving direct communication with patients, relatives and other healthcare professionals, you will also need to arrange for a letter to be sent directly to AHPRA by your education provider to confirm that the course was taught and assessed solely in English.

If your qualification is from an **Board approved program of study**, you do not need to provide additional evidence under part (b) unless requested by AHPRA.

2. Extended education pathway – registered nurses and midwives

If you are applying for registration as a registered nurse and/or a midwife, you must provide evidence that you have successfully completed at least **five (5) years (full-time equivalent)** continuous education taught and assessed solely in English, in a **recognised country**, which includes tertiary qualifications in the relevant professional discipline which you are relying on to support your eligibility for registration under the **National Law**.

NOTE:

- a. The Board will only accept the completion of **five (5) years (full-time equivalent)** continuous education that is a combination of:
 - i. **tertiary and secondary education** taught and assessed in English; or
 - ii. **tertiary and vocational education** taught and assessed in English; or
 - iii. combined **tertiary, secondary and vocational education** taught and assessed in English; or
 - iv. **tertiary education** taught and assessed in English
- b. The last period of education must have been completed no more than five years prior to applying for registration.

If you are using this pathway, you will need to provide the following:

For part (a) above, complete the table in the application form listing details of your relevant education.

You must provide evidence that each course listed in the table was taught and assessed solely in English by providing a certified copy of your transcript for **all** education you are listing in the table and relying on to meet the extended education pathway. You must include all course commencement and completion dates and evidence of whether you studied full-time or part-time.

If any of the transcripts do not show that the program of study was taught and assessed solely in English, including the clinical aspects of the program involving direct communication with patients, relatives and other healthcare professionals, you will also need to arrange for a letter to be sent directly to AHPRA by your education provider for **each** of the courses you have listed to confirm that the course was taught and assessed solely in English. A sample table is attached.

For your tertiary qualifications in the relevant professional discipline which you are relying on to support your eligibility for registration under the National Law you must provide a certified copy of your transcript showing that you have completed a pre-registration program of study, taught and assessed solely in English and approved by the recognised nursing and/or midwifery regulatory body in any of the recognised countries.

If your transcript does not show that the program of study was taught and assessed solely in English, including the clinical aspects of the program involving direct communication with patients, relatives and other healthcare professionals, you will also need to arrange for a letter to be sent directly to AHPRA by your education provider to confirm that the course was taught and assessed solely in English.

3. Extended education pathway – enrolled nurses

If you are applying for registration as an enrolled nurse, you must provide evidence that you have successfully completed at least **five (5) years (full-time equivalent)** continuous education taught and assessed solely in English, in a **recognised country**, which includes vocational qualifications in the relevant professional discipline which you are relying on to support your eligibility for registration under the **National Law**.

NOTE:

- a. The Board will only accept the completion of **five (5) years (full-time equivalent)** continuous education that is a combination of:
 - i. **vocational and secondary education** taught and assessed in English; or
 - ii. **tertiary and vocational education** taught and assessed in English; or
 - iii. combined **tertiary, secondary and vocational education** taught and assessed in English;
or
 - iv. **tertiary education** taught and assessed in English
- b. The last period of education must have been completed no more than five years prior to applying for registration.

Note: the NMBA will also accept continuous **vocation education** only taught and assessed in English to satisfy the requirements of the extended education pathway.

If you are using this pathway, you will need to provide the following.

For part (a) above, complete the table on the application form listing details of your relevant education.

You must provide evidence that each course listed in the table was taught and assessed solely in English by providing a certified copy of your transcript for **all** education you are listing in the table and relying on to meet the extended education pathway. You must include all course commencement and completion dates and evidence of whether you studied full-time or part-time.

If any of the transcripts do not show that the program of study was taught and assessed solely in English, including the clinical aspects of the program involving direct communication with patients, relatives and other healthcare professionals, you will also need to arrange for a letter to be sent directly to AHPRA by your education provider for **each** of the courses you have listed to confirm that the course was taught and assessed solely in English. A sample table is attached.

For your vocational qualifications in a relevant profession discipline which you are relying on to support your eligibility for registration under the National Law, **you must** provide a certified copy of your transcript showing that you have completed a pre-registration program of study, taught and assessed solely in English and approved by the recognised nursing regulatory body in any of the recognised countries.

If your transcript does not show that the program of study was taught and assessed solely in English, including the clinical aspects of the program involving direct communication with patients, relatives and other healthcare professionals, you will also need to arrange for a letter to be sent directly to AHPRA by your education provider to confirm that the course was taught and assessed solely in English.

4. Test pathway

You achieve the required minimum scores in one of the following English language tests and meet the requirements for **test results** specified in this standard:

The following requirements apply to the English language test results:

1. **Test results** will be accepted if they were obtained:

1.1. within the two years before the date you lodge your application for registration

OR

1.2. more than two years before the date you lodge your application for registration if, in the period since the test results were obtained, you:

- a. have been in **continuous employment** as a registered health practitioner in the nursing and/or midwifery profession (which commenced within 12 months of the date of the test) in one of the **recognised countries** where English was the primary language of practice, and
- b. lodge your application for registration within 12 months of finishing your last period of employment

OR

1.3. more than two years before the date you lodge your application for registration if, in the period since the test result was obtained, you:

- a. have been continuously enrolled in a **Board approved program of study** (which commenced within 12 months of the date of the test) and undertook subjects in each semester, with no break from study apart from the education provider's scheduled holidays, and
- b. lodge your application for registration within 12 months of completing the **Board approved program of study**.

2. For the purposes of calculating time, if an applicant relies on **test results** from two sittings, time begins to run from the date of the earlier sitting.

If you are using this pathway, you should provide:

- a) For test results from the last two years, the name of the test provider and a copy of your results which includes the number required for online verification.
- b) For test results more than two years old:
 - i. when you are relying on a period of employment to extend the validity of your test result, a certified copy of test results plus your CV, **and**:
 - a letter from employer/s confirming continuous employment as a nurse or midwife in a recognised country where English was the main language of practice over the last two years, **or**
 - a letter from a professional referee confirming continuous employment as a nurse or midwife in a recognised country over the last two years.
 - ii. when you are relying on continuous enrolment in Board approved program of study to extend the validity period of test results, a certified copy of test results plus a transcript that shows that you have been enrolled continuously in a Board approved program of study and that you:
 - commenced this study within 12 months of sitting the test, **and**
 - completed your study no longer than 12 months before lodging your application.

You must also sign the declaration on the application form.

Glossary

Board approved program of study means an accredited program of study approved by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia under section 49(1) of the National Law and published on the list of approved programs of study on the Board's website.

Continuous employment means working the equivalent of at least 26 weeks per year.

Continuously enrolled means enrolled in a course of study over consecutive calendar years without a break from study apart from the education institution's scheduled holidays.

Five years (full-time equivalent) continuous education means education over a period of five consecutive calendar years without a break from study apart from the education institution (e.g. school, university or vocation education provider) scheduled holidays.

Full-time equivalent means the normal course load that a student would need to take in order to complete a course in the minimum time (not including accelerated or fast-track courses). For example, a full-time load for a four year undergraduate degree would be the normal course load for a student who would expect to complete that degree in four years. This is set by the relevant educational institution.

National Law means the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory.

Primary education means Australian school years one (1) through to six (6) inclusive (or equivalent).

Primary language means the language primarily used for reading, writing, listening, and speaking and the language known best and most comfortable.

Recognised countries means the following countries: Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Republic of Ireland, South Africa, United Kingdom, United States of America.

Secondary education means Australian school years seven (7) through to twelve (12) inclusive (or equivalent), even where year seven is classified as primary education in a particular state or territory.

Tertiary education means education undertaken at a university, either as an undergraduate or a graduate student.

Vocational education means education taught and assessed in English in a recognised country where:

- the level of the vocational education was at the Australian Qualifications Framework Level 3 or Certificate III or higher, and
- the vocational education provided was undertaken primarily face to face and requires students to use English language speaking, writing, reading and listening skills.

We will ask you for evidence to show that your vocational education meets these requirements.

Sample education tables – NMBA English language skills registration standard

You must provide evidence that each course was taught and assessed solely in English by providing a certified copy of your transcript for **all** education you are listing in the table below and relying on to meet the Extended education pathway. You must include all course commencement and completion dates and evidence of whether you studied full-time or part-time.

If any of the transcripts do not show that the program of study was taught and assessed solely in English, including the clinical aspects of the program involving direct communication with patients, relatives and other healthcare professionals, you will also need to arrange for a letter to be sent directly to AHPRA by your education provider for **each** of the courses you have listed to confirm that the course was taught and assessed solely in English.

Primary language pathway

Timeframe	Level of education	Program name <i>If applicable</i>	Education institution <i>Specify name and address</i>	Recognised country <i>If applicable</i>	Study status
Study commenced: 01 2005	<input type="checkbox"/> Primary <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Secondary		<i>Maroochydore State High School, Maroochydore, QLD</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Australia <input type="checkbox"/> New Zealand <input type="checkbox"/> South Africa <input type="checkbox"/> United States <input type="checkbox"/> Canada <input type="checkbox"/> Republic of Ireland <input type="checkbox"/> United Kingdom	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Full time <input type="checkbox"/> Part time
Study completed: 12 2010	<input type="checkbox"/> Vocational <input type="checkbox"/> Tertiary				
Study commenced: 01 2012	<input type="checkbox"/> Primary <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary	<i>Bachelor of Nursing</i>	<i>University of Queensland, Brisbane, QLD</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Australia <input type="checkbox"/> New Zealand <input type="checkbox"/> South Africa <input type="checkbox"/> United States <input type="checkbox"/> Canada <input type="checkbox"/> Republic of Ireland <input type="checkbox"/> United Kingdom	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Full time <input type="checkbox"/> Part time
Study completed: 12 2014	<input type="checkbox"/> Vocational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tertiary				
Study commenced: MM/YYYY	<input type="checkbox"/> Primary <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary			<input type="checkbox"/> Australia <input type="checkbox"/> New Zealand <input type="checkbox"/> South Africa <input type="checkbox"/> United States <input type="checkbox"/> Canada <input type="checkbox"/> Republic of Ireland <input type="checkbox"/> United Kingdom	<input type="checkbox"/> Full time <input type="checkbox"/> Part time
Study completed: MM/YYYY	<input type="checkbox"/> Vocational <input type="checkbox"/> Tertiary				

Extended education pathway – registered nurse/midwife

Timeframe	Level of education	Program name <i>If applicable</i>	Education institution <i>Specify name and address</i>	Recognised country <i>If applicable</i>	Study status
Study commenced: 01 2010	<input type="checkbox"/> Primary <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Secondary		<i>Avondale College, Auckland, New Zealand</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Australia <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Zealand <input type="checkbox"/> South Africa <input type="checkbox"/> United States <input type="checkbox"/> Canada <input type="checkbox"/> Republic of Ireland <input type="checkbox"/> United Kingdom	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Full time <input type="checkbox"/> Part time
Study completed: 12 2011	<input type="checkbox"/> Vocational <input type="checkbox"/> Tertiary				
Study commenced: 01 2012	<input type="checkbox"/> Primary <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary	<i>Bachelor of Health Science (Midwifery)</i>	<i>Auckland University of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Australia <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Zealand <input type="checkbox"/> South Africa <input type="checkbox"/> United States <input type="checkbox"/> Canada <input type="checkbox"/> Republic of Ireland <input type="checkbox"/> United Kingdom	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Full time <input type="checkbox"/> Part time
Study completed: 12 2014	<input type="checkbox"/> Vocational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tertiary				
Study commenced: MM/YYYY	<input type="checkbox"/> Primary <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary			<input type="checkbox"/> Australia <input type="checkbox"/> New Zealand <input type="checkbox"/> South Africa <input type="checkbox"/> United States <input type="checkbox"/> Canada <input type="checkbox"/> Republic of Ireland <input type="checkbox"/> United Kingdom	<input type="checkbox"/> Full time <input type="checkbox"/> Part time
Study completed: MM/YYYY	<input type="checkbox"/> Vocational <input type="checkbox"/> Tertiary				

Extended education pathway – enrolled nurse

Timeframe	Level of education	Program name If applicable	Education institution Specify name and address	Recognised country If applicable	Study status
Study commenced: 01 2010	<input type="checkbox"/> Primary <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Secondary	Higher School Certificate	Auburn Girls High School, Auburn, NSW	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Australia <input type="checkbox"/> New Zealand <input type="checkbox"/> South Africa <input type="checkbox"/> United States <input type="checkbox"/> Canada <input type="checkbox"/> Republic of Ireland <input type="checkbox"/> United Kingdom	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Full time <input type="checkbox"/> Part time
Study completed: 12 2011	<input type="checkbox"/> Vocational <input type="checkbox"/> Tertiary				
Study commenced: 01 2012	<input type="checkbox"/> Primary <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary	Diploma of Early Childhood Education	Victoria University Institute of Technology, Melbourne VIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Australia <input type="checkbox"/> New Zealand <input type="checkbox"/> South Africa <input type="checkbox"/> United States <input type="checkbox"/> Canada <input type="checkbox"/> Republic of Ireland <input type="checkbox"/> United Kingdom	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Full time <input type="checkbox"/> Part time
Study completed: 06 2013	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vocational <input type="checkbox"/> Tertiary				
Study commenced: 07 2013	<input type="checkbox"/> Primary <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary	Diploma of Nursing	Victoria University Institute of Technology, Melbourne VIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Australia <input type="checkbox"/> New Zealand <input type="checkbox"/> South Africa <input type="checkbox"/> United States <input type="checkbox"/> Canada <input type="checkbox"/> Republic of Ireland <input type="checkbox"/> United Kingdom	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Full time <input type="checkbox"/> Part time
Study completed: 12 2014	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vocational <input type="checkbox"/> Tertiary				

Document control

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