

Fact sheet

Updated May 2023

Internationally qualified registered nurses applying for registration with a sole qualification in mental health nursing, disability nursing or paediatric nursing

Introduction

The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) undertakes functions as set by the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law). The NMBA regulates the practice of nursing and midwifery in Australia, and one of its key roles is to protect the public. The NMBA does this by developing registration standards, professional codes, guidelines and standards for practice which together establish the requirements for the professional and safe practice of nurses and midwives in Australia.

Information about the assessment model for internationally qualified nurses and midwives (IQNMs) is published on the [NMBA website](#).

This following information is applicable for internationally qualified registered nurses (IQRNs) seeking registration with qualifications solely in mental health nursing, disability nursing or paediatric nursing.

Notations for registered nurses with sole qualifications

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

Registered nurses (RNs) who have a sole qualification in mental health, disability or paediatric nursing do not have a qualification that is substantially equivalent to the foundation of an NMBA-approved qualification leading to registration as a registered nurse.

Depending on their area of practice, RNs with one of these qualifications are registered with a notation stating that they are:

- solely qualified in the area of mental health nursing
- solely qualified in the area of paediatric nursing or
- solely qualified in the area of disability nursing.

2. What does the notation mean?

The notation is used by National Boards to describe and explain the scope of a practitioner's practice by noting the limitations on that practice.

The NMBA expects that nurses and midwives recognise and work within their scope of practice which is determined by their foundational education, training, authorisation, competence, qualifications and experience, in accordance with local policy¹. To expand your scope of practice beyond the area of practice

¹ Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia - Code of conduct for nurses 1 March 2018 - 2.2(e)

in which you hold the notation, you will first need to complete an NMBA-approved program of study leading to general registration as a registered nurse and apply to the NMBA to have the notation removed.

3. Are there any other specific areas of nursing that have a notation in Australia?

Yes, enrolled nurses (ENs) who have not completed EN medicines administration education have a notation on their registration stating 'Does not hold a Board-approved qualification in administration of medicines'. Most ENs complete administration of medicines education as part of their pre-registration program.

4. 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 an RN. Notations are used to provide relevant information to employers and the public on an individual's registration status, in these circumstances the area in which they are qualified.

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

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

The NMBA assesses all IQRNs 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).

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

IQRNs with qualifications solely in mental health nursing, disability nursing or paediatric nursing at AQF level 6 will be registered with conditions for 12 months' full-time equivalent supervised practice. Information on the NMBA's requirements for supervised practice can be found on the NMBA's website [here](#). 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 but the notation remains.

For more information

- [Internationally qualified nurses and midwives](#) section of the NMBA website
- [Supervised practice](#) section of the NMBA website.
- Visit www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au under *Contact us* to lodge an online enquiry form
- For registration enquiries: 1300 419 495 (in Australia) +61 3 9275 9009 (overseas callers)

Document history

Approved by: Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia

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Next review due: May 2028

Policy history: Is this a new policy? **N**

Does this policy amend or update an existing policy? **Y**

If so which version **v1.2**

Does this policy replace another policy with a different title? **Y**

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Approval date	Version	Reason for change
May 2023	v1.3	Amended document title for clarity Additional wording included to provide clarity around expanding scope of practice Deletion of questions related to supervised practice as this is covered in detail in the NMBA's supervised practice guidance documents
November 2021	v1.2	New document template Updated introduction section for consistency with other NMBA fact sheets
July 2019	v1.1	Minor typographic edits Updated references to <i>Supervision guidelines for nursing and midwifery</i>
January 2019	v1.0	n/a