

Registration standard

General registration for internationally qualified registered nurses

April 2025

Summary

This registration standard sets out the eligibility requirements of the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) for internationally qualified registered nurses (IQRNs) applying for general registration as a registered nurse in Australia.

The NMBA will consider the individual circumstances of an IQRN when deciding an application for registration.

Does this standard apply to me?

This standard applies to IQRNs who hold a qualification that is relevant to the nursing profession.

It establishes two (2) pathways to general registration for IQRNs who meet the qualification and eligibility requirements of section 52 and 53 of the National Law and the requirements of this registration standard and the NMBA's mandatory registration standards.

This standard does not apply to IQRNs who have a sole qualification in mental health nursing, paediatric nursing, or disability nursing.

This standard does not apply to IQRNs who have a substantially equivalent qualification.

Requirements

This standard applies to IQRNs who can meet the requirements stated under the following two (2) pathways.

Pathway 1

IQRNs applying under Pathway 1 must demonstrate and provide evidence of:

1. Qualification requirements under s52(1)(a) and s53(c) of the National Law
 - a. A relevant qualification obtained in an NMBA-approved comparable jurisdiction that led to general registration as a registered nurse in that NMBA-approved international regulatory jurisdiction¹,
 - b. Completed assessment by way of:
 - i) completion of a minimum of 1,800 hours practice as a registered nurse in any of the NMBA-approved comparable jurisdictions since 1 January 2017, and
 - ii) a statement from each employer where all or part of the minimum 1,800 hours of practice has been completed that confirms that they are satisfied that the IQRN has the necessary knowledge, skills and ability to practise at the standard expected of a registered nurse by the regulatory authority of the NMBA-approved comparable jurisdiction.
2. Other requirements under s52(1)(e) of the National Law
 - a. Current/previous general registration, as a registered nurse in any of the NMBA-approved comparable jurisdictions,
 - b. A Certificate of Good Standing issued by the regulatory authority of any of the NMBA-approved comparable jurisdiction or jurisdictions in which the IQRN has completed the 1,800 hours practice, and
 - c. Meeting the requirements of the following approved registration standards:
 - i) Criminal history,
 - ii) Continuing professional development,
 - iii) English language skills,
 - iv) Recency of practice, and
 - v) Professional indemnity insurance arrangements.

1. An example may be a qualification that has been obtained through completion of a hospital-based training program that was the approved qualification that led to registration in the NMBA-approved comparable jurisdictions at the time the qualification was obtained.

Pathway 2

IQRNs applying under Pathway 2 must demonstrate and provide evidence of:

1. Qualification requirements under s52(1)(a) and s53(c) of the National Law
 - a) A relevant qualification not obtained in any of the NMBA-approved comparable jurisdictions since 1 January 2017, and
 - b) Successful completion of a regulatory examination process for internationally qualified registered nurses in any of the NMBA-approved comparable jurisdictions.
2. Competency requirements under s52(1)(b) of the National Law
 - a) Successful completion of a regulatory examination process for internationally qualified registered nurses in any of the NMBA-approved comparable jurisdictions.
3. Other requirements under s52(1)(e) of the National Law
 - a) Current/previous general registration, as a registered nurse in any of the NMBA-approved comparable jurisdictions since 1 January 2017,
 - b) Practice as a registered nurse for a minimum of 1,800 hours in any of the NMBA-approved comparable jurisdictions since 1 January 2017, and
 - c) Meeting the requirements of the following approved registration standards:
 - i) Criminal history,
 - ii) Continuing professional development,
 - iii) English language skills,
 - iv) Recency of practice, and
 - v) Professional indemnity insurance arrangements.

What happens if I don't meet this standard?

IQRNs who cannot meet the qualification and eligibility requirements will not be eligible for general registration via Pathway 1 or 2.

Authority

This registration standard was approved by the Ministerial Council on 26 September 2024.

Registration standards are developed under section 38 of the National Law and are subject to wide ranging consultation.

Definitions

Comparable jurisdiction means: an NMBA-approved international regulatory jurisdiction (country, state or province) that has comparable regulatory approaches, regulatory standards for education and registration, regulatory processes, and procedures for the registration of internationally qualified registered nurses. A list of the NMBA-approved comparable jurisdictions will be published on the NMBA website.

Eligibility for general registration in a health profession means:

- a) the individual is qualified for general registration in the health profession; and
- b) the individual has successfully completed (i) any period of supervised practice in the health profession required by an approved registration standard for the health profession; or (ii) any examination or assessment required by an approved registration standard for the health profession to assess the individual's ability to practise the profession competently and safely; and
- c) the individual is a suitable person to hold general registration in the health profession; and
- d) the individual is not disqualified under this Law or a law of a co-regulatory jurisdiction from applying for registration, or being registered, in the health profession; and
- e) the individual meets any other requirements for registration stated in an approved registration standard for the health profession.

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

Practice means any role, whether remunerated or not, in which the individual uses their skills and knowledge as a health practitioner in their profession. Practice in this context is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical care. It also includes using professional knowledge (working) in a direct non-clinical relationship with clients, working in management, administration, education, research, advisory, regulatory or policy development roles, and any other roles that impact on the safe, effective delivery of services in the profession.

Recency of practice means that a health practitioner has maintained an adequate connection with, and recent practice in the profession since qualifying for, or obtaining registration.

Relevant qualification means: a qualification relevant to the health profession (that is not an approved qualification, or substantially equivalent or based on similar competencies to an approved qualification).

Successful completion of a regulatory examination process means IQRNs who gained registration through mutual recognition agreements with jurisdictions outside of the approved NMBA list, have been assessed at an entry to practice registered nurse level by an NMBA-approved comparable jurisdiction.

Review

The Board will review this registration standard at least every three years.