

Communiqué

June 2022 meeting of the Accreditation Committee

The Agency Management Committee established the Accreditation Committee consistent with [Ministerial Council Policy Direction 2020-1](#) to provide independent and expert advice on accreditation reform and other National Scheme accreditation matters to National Scheme entities (National Boards, Accreditation Authorities and Ahpra). Other external entities performing accreditation roles as part of the National Scheme, such as specialist colleges and postgraduate medical councils should have regard for the committee's advice, where relevant.

The Accreditation Committee issues a communiqué after each meeting to keep stakeholders informed about its work.

The Accreditation Committee held its fourth meeting via videoconference on 1 June 2022 and focused on the initial work for each deliverable in the [published workplan](#), taking into account mapping of current approaches or progress.

Progress of work by other National Scheme entities

The Committee received updates on work underway related to the Committee's work program from the Accreditation Liaison Group (ALG) and the Health Professions Accreditation Collaborative Forum (HPACF). These updates facilitate information sharing and identify linkages between work programs across the Committee and other National Scheme entities. The Committee noted the updates as valuable and thanked the ALG and HPACF for their contributions.

The Committee's glossary of accreditation terms

The Committee considered and approved an updated project plan and initial list of terms for inclusion in the glossary. Ahpra and the HPACF will continue to work together to implement the project plan through the newly established Joint Ahpra-HPACF Working Group. This work recognises the importance of shared language to progressing the committee's whole-of-scheme and cross-profession advice in a range of areas. Shared language will build a shared understanding of the advice across different professions, different National Scheme entities and external stakeholders and will support consistent approaches to implementing the committee's advice.

Interprofessional education (IPE) and interprofessional collaborative practice (IPCP)

One of the Committee's first priorities is a National Scheme statement of intent for IPCP. The Committee noted the complementary work being undertaken by the ALG and HPACF on interprofessional learning (IPL) and IPE and approved a project plan and proposed framework for the IPCP statement of intent. This work will now be progressed through the Committee's IPCP Statement of Intent Working Group.

Fostering good practice and enhanced efficiency in professional capabilities and accreditation standards across National Scheme professions

Understanding current commonalities in professional capabilities and accreditation standards and processes will enable the Committee to identify where its work can add value.

Members discussed preliminary work to map existing commonalities in professional capabilities and accreditation standards and processes across National Scheme professions and agreed to test and validate these early drafts with national boards and accreditation authorities.

Members agreed that it would be important to articulate the benefits of greater consistency across professions and to identify areas where consistency would be beneficial and areas where profession-specific approaches would need to be retained to support the Committee's subsequent work.

Reducing duplication and overlap between accreditation authorities and education regulators

Members discussed an early draft of initial work to map the accreditation-related roles of National Scheme entities, the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) and health services. This mapping will be tested with accreditation authorities, TEQSA and the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care. The mapping may enhance members' understanding of the accreditation-related roles of relevant entities and will help the committee to identify where its work could add most value, eg by identifying areas of potential overlap and ways to clarify the respective regulatory roles of different bodies related to accreditation.

Strengthening consumer involvement in accreditation

Mapping current involvement of consumers in accreditation across different regulated health professions will help the Committee to identify good practice that could be promoted or strengthened. The Committee considered early mapping and agreed it is important to define the term 'consumer' in the context of this area of work. Members agreed that next steps should include:

- providing an overview of work to date to strengthen consumer involvement in accreditation, including rural communities and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples
- exploring potential good practice approaches, including those within the National Scheme, international examples and those identified in the literature, and
- proposing possible shared principles to ensure consumer involvement is meaningful.

Good-practice in the use of outcome-based approaches to accreditation

The Committee discussed early drafts of work to enhance members' understanding of current outcome-based approaches in accreditation across the National Scheme, noting that the drafts need to be validated with accreditation authorities. Enhanced understanding will help the Committee identify what type of guidance could support and promote good practice approaches. Members agreed that further work is needed to define clearly what is meant by 'outcome-based approaches' and will seek input from the HPACF on the best way to gather information about good practice examples. Members noted that further work and a proposal for the development of good practice guidance will be presented to a future meeting.

Embedding diverse clinical placements and evidence-based technological advances

Mapping current approaches to, and descriptions of, clinical placements and technological advances in accreditation standards across National Scheme professions may help the Committee to identify good practice that could be promoted or strengthened. Members considered initial work, based on a desktop review, and noted it shows that all 16 professions in the National Scheme include statements about diverse clinical placements in their accreditation standards and associated guidelines and most explicitly mention simulation or simulated learning. The Committee agreed more detailed work is required, including validation of information by the accreditation authorities.

The Chair requested that a deep dive on this topic be presented to the next meeting. Members agreed that this should include exploring national/international practice to identify good practice approaches to facilitating diverse clinical placements and exposure to evidence-based technological advances in health practitioner education.

Streamlined process for assessment of internationally qualified practitioners

Members discussed preliminary mapping of current pathways for Australian graduates who are registered through Ahpra's graduate registration process and require a skills assessment. Members noted the complexity of arrangements for assessment of overseas qualified practitioners for the purposes of skilled migration and registration, including the involvement of multiple bodies within and outside the National Scheme. Clarifying the registration/migration pathways will help the Committee identify where its work could add most value, for example by streamlining assessment processes where this is possible.

Members agreed to prioritise analysis of pathways to assess and register overseas trained medical practitioners, nurses and midwives, given the pressures currently being experienced in health workforces across Australia.

Accreditation funding and costs

The Chair provided an update on the procurement of expert advice on the comparability of funding and costs data across accreditation authorities and the further development of funding and fee setting principles. A Request for Proposal was released to several specific invitees at the end of March and closed at the end of April. An evaluation panel, including a National Board Chair, accreditation authority representatives and Ahpra representatives evaluated submissions. Contract negotiations are underway, and the preferred supplier is expected to commence work in July 2022.

Next meeting

The next meeting of the Accreditation Committee will be held on 31 August 2022.

More information

Questions about the work of the Committee may be directed to the secretariat via email to: ahpranationalexecutivesecretariat@ahpra.gov.au.

Meeting attendees

Members

Professor Andrew Wilson	Independent Chair
Professor Maree O'Keefe	Accreditation / education expert
Dr Heather Buchan	Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care
Dr Helen Gniel	Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA)
Emeritus Professor Ian Wronski AO	Universities Australia
Ms Narelle Mills	Health Professions Accreditation Collaborative Forum (HPACF)
Professor Brian Jolly	HPACF
Mr Jeffrey Moffet	Agency Management Committee
Adjunct Professor Veronica Casey AM	National Boards representative
Mr Brett Simmonds	National Boards representative
Ms Alison Barnes	Nominee of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Strategy Group
Dr Hamza Vayani	Consumer representative

Ahpra

Mr Martin Fletcher	Chief Executive Officer, Ahpra
Mr Chris Robertson	Executive Director, Strategy and Policy
Ms Helen Townley	National Director, Policy and Accreditation
Ms Margaret Grant	Specialist Accreditation Adviser
Ms Kerryn Rozenbergs	Senior Policy Officer
Mr Peter Knapp	Secretariat

Apologies

Ms Deborah Frew	Jurisdictional representative
Dr Susan Young	Agency Management Committee
Mrs Kay Leatherland	Private healthcare employer

Areas referred by Ministers

Supporting the future health workforce

Supporting good practice in professional capabilities



Progressing the role of competency standards in accreditation

This work will support continued progress on common approaches to professional capabilities development, where feasible and safe, including good practice guidance for capabilities development.

Embedding interprofessional education



Enhancing interprofessional education and collaborative practice

This work will focus on how best to embed interprofessional education and prepare practitioners with the knowledge, skills and professional attributes to engage in interprofessional collaborative practice.

Strengthening consumer involvement



Strengthening the role of consumers (including employers) in accreditation systems

This work will support good practice approaches to consumer involvement in accreditation and enhance the link between service delivery needs and the education system.

Possible additional area for work plan

Streamlining assessment of overseas-qualified practitioners



Aligning qualification assessment outcomes and processes with immigration processes

This work will develop a one-step approach to the assessment of overseas trained practitioners for the purposes of skilled migration and registration

Strengthening accreditation systems

Enhancing consistency across professions



Strengthening cross-profession policies and guidelines for accreditation standards and processes

This work will support enhanced consistency in accreditation standards and processes across National Scheme professions, through the use of standardised terminology and definitions and common approaches

Focusing on outcome-based approaches



Maintaining the focus on outcome-based approaches in accreditation

This work will support accreditation standards that continue to encourage flexible and innovative approaches to education, especially in response to changes in community need, healthcare models and innovations in health practice.

Understanding costs and funding



Developing funding principles that enable the costs of accreditation functions to be measured and compared across professions.

This work will support continued progress towards strengthened transparency and accountability of the financial arrangements for accreditation.

Avoiding duplication



Clarifying the roles of accreditation authorities and education regulators

This work will enhance shared understanding of potential overlap and duplication between the roles of accreditation authorities and education regulators and aim to reduce regulatory burden.