

## Fact sheet

---

Updated December 2023

### Re-entry to practice

#### 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 standards, codes and guidelines which together establish the requirements for the professional and safe practice of nurses and midwives in Australia.

The [Registration standard: Recency of practice](#) (the standard) sets out the NMBA's requirements in relation to the minimum numbers of hours of practice for registered nurses, enrolled nurses and midwives. All applicants for registration and renewal of registration in Australia must meet the recency of practice requirements set out in the standard.

To meet the standard:

- **applicants who hold general or non-practising registration**, but have not practised for between five and 15 years: must satisfactorily complete a period of supervised practice or a re-entry to practice program that is approved by the NMBA
- **applicants who are no longer registered** and wish to return to practice must apply for provisional registration before engaging in any form of practice, supervised or otherwise. See also the NMBA [Fact sheet: Provisional registration information for nurses and midwives](#) for specific information on applying for provisional registration

#### Who does this apply to?

This fact sheet is relevant to those who:

- have had a lapse in practice of five years or more, or
- have held non-practising registration for five or more years, or
- have never held registration and/or
- have never practised and no longer meet the definition of recent graduate, or
- are no longer on the register.

This document must be read in conjunction with the [Registration standard: Recency of practice](#) and [Policy: Re-entry to practice](#).

#### When do I need to consider my recency of practice?

When applying for initial registration or at annual renewal of registration you are required to make a declaration about your practice in the last five years. It is important to evaluate your knowledge and skills to make sure that you have the appropriate education, training, experience, and competence to undertake nursing and/or midwifery practice.

The only exception is for recent graduates who are applying for registration for the first time and within two years of being awarded their qualification.

#### What needs to be done?

If you have been out of practice for **five years or more**, you need to provide the NMBA sufficient information to review your specific requirements for re-entry to practice.

The application forms collect information about your qualifications, work and registration history, continuing professional development activities, plans for future professional practice, and length of time away from practising in the profession/s. It includes mapping your recent practice against the standards for practice. The information collected is used to determine whether you require any additional training, periods of supervision, programs, or other requirements to meet eligibility for general registration.

### **If you currently hold general registration and have not practised for five years or more**

You can contact Ahpra directly or you must declare at registration renewal that you do not meet the requirements of the [Registration standard: Recency of practice](#).

### **If you currently hold non-practising registration and wish to return to practice**

You will need to change to a registration type that permits practice by completing the form [Application for general registration as an enrolled nurse, registered nurse or midwife \(for current non-practising registrants - AGNP-40\)](#).

### **If you are no longer registered**

You will need to apply for provisional registration by completing the form [Application for provisional registration for re-entry to practice – APRO-40](#).

Internationally qualified nurses and midwives assessed as a Stream A pathway, and who do not meet recency of practice, will be assessed on an individual basis.

### **What is provisional registration?**

Provisional registration is a registration type that enables a nurse and/or midwife to complete a period of supervised practice or an NMBA-approved re-entry to practice program to be eligible for general registration. The [Fact sheet: Provisional registration information for nurses and midwives](#) provides specific information and direction for provisional applicants.

### **How will my application be processed?**

A range of factors are considered when assessing what is needed for your re-entry to practice including qualifications, work and registration history, continuing professional development activities, plans for future professional practice, and length of time away from practising in the profession/s. All applications are assessed by the NMBA, who must be satisfied that you are safe and competent to practise the profession/s in Australia. Examples of evidence that should be provided with your application are in Table 1.

**Table 1:**

<b>Evidence required</b>	<b>Examples and cues</b>
Initial and subsequent qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentary evidence of the qualification that entitled you to initial registration in your profession. This may have been completed at university, through a registered training authority such as TAFE, or you may have completed hospital-based training.</li> <li>• Documentary evidence of any additional qualifications gained that have relevance to your nursing and/or midwifery practice. This may be post-graduate study in your area of practice.</li> <li>• Any other formal qualifications that developed your professional skills and knowledge.</li> </ul>
Continuing professional development and connection to the profession	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentary evidence of professional development courses, study, conferences or reading that demonstrates maintenance, improvement and broadening of knowledge, expertise and competence.</li> </ul> <p>This could be presented as a portfolio of evidence and may include ongoing memberships with professional</p>

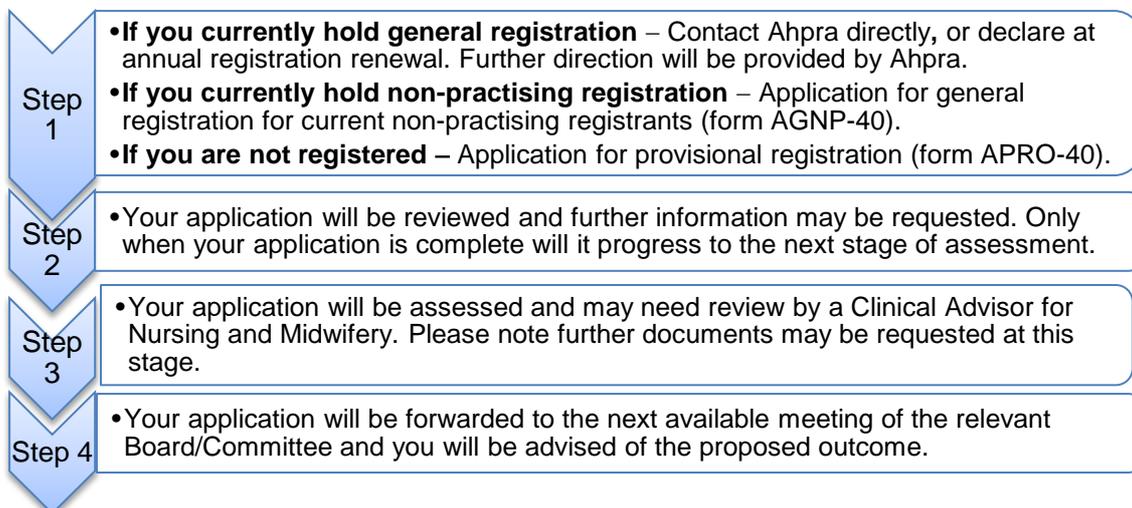
	organisations or colleges, where ongoing learning and/or an active role can be evidenced.
Extent of nursing and/or midwifery work/practice (paid or unpaid/voluntary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statement/s of service from each employer/s that includes the position held, the number of hours worked (full-time/part-time), and how the roles/s involved the application of nursing and/or midwifery practice. The statements of service must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– be on the employer’s letterhead</li> <li>– contain your name</li> <li>– the position/role held</li> <li>– contain details of service including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the date that you commenced and finished working in the position</li> <li>○ whether the work was full-time, part-time or a combination. If any of the work has been part-time, provide details of full-time equivalent worked</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Detail of your role, particularly where the title of the position does not include ‘nurse’ or ‘midwife’.</li> <li>• A position description can be useful to demonstrate that the role involved the use of nursing and/or midwifery knowledge</li> <li>• Submit the standards for practice mapping template, to demonstrate how you have met the nursing and/or midwifery standards for practice since your last nursing or midwifery position.</li> </ul>

### Re-entry to practice pathways

After the documentation is considered, the NMBA may decide to approve your application subject to restrictions, grant provisional registration for applicants not on the register or refuse your application. Possible outcomes of your application, if it is approved, may include any one of the following:

- Approval of your application to complete an NMBA-approved period of supervised practice **(Pathway 1)**
- Approval of your application to complete an NMBA-approved re-entry to practice program **(Pathway 2)**
- Refusal of your application and referral to an NMBA-approved program of study leading to general registration. This applies to all nurses and/or midwives who hold general or non-practising registration and have not practised for 15 years or more, and to those seeking re-registration who have not practised for 15 years or more.

### Overview of the process



## What are my practice requirements when registered for Pathway 1 – supervised practice?

You must hold general or provisional registration before commencing, and for the duration of, your supervised practice placement.

The [Supervised practice framework](#) outlines the requirements and responsibility that you will need to meet in order to be eligible for general registration.

There are four levels of supervised practice: direct, indirect (present), indirect (accessible) or remote (see [definitions](#)). The NMBA will let you know which level of supervision that you will commence your supervised practice. It is a requirement that you work under the supervision of your primary supervisor\* or, in their absence, your alternate supervisor (as per your *Supervised practice plan*). In the absence of any approved supervisor, you must cease practice.

\*For enrolled nurses the primary supervisor must be a registered nurse.

Table 2 provides an overview of the documents and reporting requirements for supervised practice.

**Table 2: Timelines and requirements**

<b>1. Prior to commencing practice</b>
Submit to Ahpra <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Letter confirming support for the practitioner for a supervised practice position</li><li>Signed <a href="#">Supervised practice plan</a> ensuring the nominated supervisor/s meet the supervisor definition specified in the <a href="#">Supervised practice framework</a></li></ul>
<b>2. Following receipt of approval for supervision arrangements</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Submit <a href="#">Supervised practice report(s)</a> as per the reporting frequency outlined in the approved <i>Supervised practice plan</i>.</li></ul>
<b>3. Change in circumstance</b>
Inform the NMBA within 7 days <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>If your approved supervisor is no longer able to give supervision, you will need to submit the following form <a href="#">Request for change in circumstances for nurses and midwives undertaking supervised practice – ACCL-40</a> to Ahpra</li></ul>

### For supervisees undertaking supervised practice submitted or approved before 1 February 2022

Transition arrangements apply to supervisees and supervisors who were part of a supervised practice arrangement already submitted or approved before 1 February 2022.

The previous [Supervision guidelines for nursing and midwifery](#) will continue to apply. For more information refer to the [Fact sheet: Supervised practice framework - transition arrangements](#).

Should your period of supervised practice extend beyond 1 February 2023, you will be required to move from the above supervision arrangements to the *Supervised practice framework* and submit the framework's relevant supporting documents.

## What are my requirements when registered for Pathway 2 – an NMBA approved re-entry to practice program?

You must hold general or provisional registration before commencing, and for the duration of, your re-entry program. Registrants completing an NMBA-approved re-entry to practice program (Pathway 2), listed as an [approved program of study](#), are required to submit the following:

- Letter of offer from the education provider, confirming commencement date of the re-entry to practice program

### What is the likely outcome if I have not practised for 15 years or more?

If you have not practised for 15 years or more you will not be eligible for Pathway 1 or 2. You must demonstrate successful completion of an [NMBA-approved program of study](#) leading to initial registration, as identified by an NMBA-approved education provider (following recognition of prior learning).

## What is the likely outcome if I have never practised?

If you completed an NMBA-approved program of study more than two years ago and have never practised, you no longer meet the definition of *recent graduate*. Your application will be assessed on a case-by-case basis to determine a safe entry into practice.

### For more information

- [Registration standard: Recency of practice](#)
- [Policy: Re-entry to practice](#)
- [Fact sheet: Provisional registration information for nurses and midwives](#)
- [Fact sheet: Provisional registration information for health services and employers](#)
- [Supervised practice framework](#)
- [FAQ: Supervised practice framework](#)
- Visit [www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au](http://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

<b>Approved by:</b>	Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia
<b>Date commenced:</b>	February 2019
<b>Next review due:</b>	February 2027
<b>Policy history:</b>	Is this a new policy? <b>N</b> Does this policy amend or update an existing policy? <b>Y</b> If so which version <b>v3.1</b> Does this policy replace another policy with a different title? <b>N</b>

Approval date	Version	Reason for change
December 2023	v3.2	Addition of information regarding re-entry to practice pathway for people who have held registration, or have never held registration, and completed an NMBA-approved program of study more than two years ago. A statement for Stream A IQNMs
December 2022	v3.1	Updated to reflect changes to <i>Policy: Re-entry to practice</i> – additional pathway for people who have not practised for a period of 10 to 15 years
February 2022	v3.0	New document template Updated to reflect commencement of <i>Supervised practice framework</i>
February 2019	v2.0	Editorial changes to reflect document coming into effect (from previous advanced copy)
November 2018	v1.0	Advanced copy