

Policy

Updated March 2019

Transition NMBA English language skills registration standard

Authority

This policy is developed pursuant to the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) functions under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

Section 38 of the National Law requires the NMBA to develop an English language skills registration standard (ELS Standard).

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide information about transitional arrangements for the NMBA *English language skills registration standard (2019)* (ELS standard (2019)) which came into effect on 1 March 2019. The NMBA ELS standard (2019) replaces the NMBA *English language skills registration standard (2015)* and sets out the NMBA's requirements for English language skills for applicants for registration.

Summary of revisions to the NMBA ELS registration standard

The ELS standard (2019) includes an amendment to the Extended Education Pathway of the standard. The amendment to the Extended Education Pathway has been made to clarify the existing requirement to complete at least five (5) years (full-time equivalent) education as **continuous** education.

This reflects the position of the NMBA that the five years of education should be over a set period of time in order for the NMBA to be satisfied that the five years (full-time equivalent) continuous education contributed to the acquisition of English language skills including; reading, writing, speaking and listening and be equivalent to the other pathways in the ELS standard (2019). Five (5) years (full-time equivalent) continuous education provides the NMBA with some evidence of a sustained and continuous period of use and exposure to English language and also provides some assurance that the English language skills acquired during the extended period of education have not fallen below the level required by the ELS standard.

This intent was reflected in the *NMBA English language skills registration standard policy (2016)*. The NMBA has now included this requirement into the ELS standard (2019) to make this requirement clear.

A definition of 'five years (full-time equivalent) **continuous** education' is now provided in the ELS standard (2019) and the requirements to demonstrate English language competency using the Extended Education Pathway have been reworded to improve clarity.

A definition for the term 'vocational education' has also been added to the ELS standard (2019).

Transition arrangements

The ELS standard (2019) will come into effect **1 March 2019**.

To give applicants time to familiarise themselves with the 2019 standard, the NMBA released an advanced copy of the standard on 23 October 2018.

As of 1 March 2019, the ELS standard (2019) applies to all applicants.

To ensure a reasonable transition, this policy sets out the transition arrangements for a specific cohort of applicants. Due to the timing of the commencement of the ELS standard (2019) applicants enrolled in an NMBA-approved program of study **before 1 March 2019** and who complete their NMBA-approved program of study and apply for initial registration between 1 March 2019 and **1 March 2020** can satisfy ELS requirements by:

- providing evidence to meet the requirements of the NMBA *English language skills registration standard (2019)* **or**
 - if applying under the Extended Education Pathway, provide evidence that the five years of education was completed in accordance with the following criteria:
 - the education was taught and assessed in English in a recognised country
 - the five years of education was completed within seven years
 - the last period of education must have been completed within a period of seven years and no more than five years prior to applying for registration.
 - the education was delivered primarily face to face and requires students to use English language speaking, writing, reading and listening skills
 - the education was completed as full-time equivalent
 - the education meets the definition of vocational education
 - meet the requirements of the evidence guide
- and** provide evidence to meet all other requirements of the retired NMBA ELS standard (2015).

The second option above and specific requirements **only** applies to the cohort of applicants as identified in this policy. This is not an alternative to the requirements of the ELS standard (2019). All other applicants will have to comply with the ELS standard (2019).

For more information

ELS revised information for applicants, including a revised policy, fact sheet and evidence guide is available on the [NMBA website](#).

Definitions

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 in the Board's list of approved programs of study on the Board's website.

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.

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

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

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

Document control

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