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## **Nursing, Nurses - Australian Migration Requirements**

### **Nursing**

There are two levels of nurse in Australia: the registered nurse and the enrolled nurse.

#### **Registered nurses**

Registered nurses hold a degree in nursing or its equivalent. Nursing courses are comprehensive in nature and prepare a nurse to work in a variety of health care settings. Each university sets its own requirements for entry into the course but the successful completion of Year 12 of secondary education is usually a requirement of all universities. Provision is also made for the entry of mature aged students to courses.

#### **Enrolled nurses/Registered Nurse Division 2**

Enrolled nurses/Registered Nurses Division 2 are educated through advanced certificate or associate diploma level courses in colleges of Technical and Further Education (TAFE). They provide nursing care within the limits specified by the registering authority's licence to practise. Enrolled nurses work under the supervision of registered nurses but retain responsibility for their own actions and remain accountable to the registered nurse for all delegated functions.

#### **Australian Nursing Council Inc.**

The **Australian Nursing Council Inc.** (ANC) is a national body that has been set up through the initiative of nurses' registration authorities. Its purpose is to establish and maintain standards and processes for the regulation of nursing within Australia.

ANC has published national competency standards for registered and enrolled nurses/registered nurse division 2 that are core standards which all nurses must possess. They assist in indicating the scope of nursing practice. The competency standards can be obtained directly from ANC and from the ANC website.

ANC assesses the qualifications of overseas-educated nurses for migration purposes. Please note that nurses with enrolled nurse qualifications (Registered Nurse Division 2) **should not apply for assessment** under the General Skilled Migration category as enrolled nurse/registered nurse division 2 is **not one of the nominated skilled occupations** on the [Skilled Occupations List](#) (SOL) in the General Skilled Migration booklet (see General Skilled Migration).

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ANC has no legal authority to provide registration as a nurse, be involved or responsible for employment of nurses in Australia or deal with immigration requirements or visa matters. It is a legal requirement that nurses must be registered or enrolled with the registration authority in the State or Territory in which they intend to practise.

## **Recognition Procedures in Australia**

In assessing an overseas application for registered nurses, evidence submitted by the applicant relating to education qualifications and work experience is examined and assessed by ANC against determined standards and criteria. This process ensures that the standard of nursing education and work experience is comparable to the standard required in Australia.

Nurses who are applying for assessment of their qualifications from countries other than the United Kingdom, United States of America, Ireland or the Republic of South Africa are required to pass either the:

- [Occupational English Test \(OET\)](#) with a B pass or more in each section; or
- [IELTS Academic Test](#) with a score of not less than 6.5 in each section with an overall score of not less than 7.

Assessments are valid for a period of 2 years after which time a new assessment is required.

Overseas nurses who are already resident in Australia are not required to have their qualifications assessed by the ANC and should in the first instance apply directly to the nurse regulatory authority in the state where they wish to practice nursing.

Nurses entering Australia on a working holiday visa are not required to have an assessment by ANC and should apply directly to the relevant state or territory nurse regulatory authority prior to departure for Australia.

It is a requirement for registration in Australia that nurses must possess and demonstrate the National Nursing Competency Standards. Overseas nurses must also be able to demonstrate the national nursing competency standards in order to be eligible for registration in Australia and may therefore be required to complete a competency based assessment programme/migrant bridging programme in Australia before being eligible for registration and migration.

The requirement to complete a competency based assessment programme/migrant bridging programme may be waived for nurses from countries where:



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- the initial education programme leading to registration is recognised as equivalent to those in Australian by the Australian nurse regulatory authorities, and
- sufficient numbers of nurses have been able to demonstrate competence continuously to enable the Australian nurse regulatory authorities to determine that all nurses who have completed their initial education in those countries are able to demonstrate the national competency standards. These include the United Kingdom, Ireland, United States of America, South Africa, Canada, Singapore, Hong Kong and nurses from the Netherlands who have completed a nursing program leading to HBO qualifications.