

## Department of Nursing Inherent Requirements Policy

To support potential and current students' decision making about their suitability for the course, a series of inherent requirement statements are detailed. These statements specify the course requirements of the Bachelor of Nursing (Honours) for student admission and progression. The statements are clustered under seven domains consisting of legal requirements, observation skills/sensory capacity, communication skills, motor skills, behavioural and social skills, cognitive capacity, and sustained performance.

The Department of Nursing at UWA strongly supports the right of all people who wish to pursue a nursing course to achieve their potential and career objectives. The Department of Nursing is committed to making reasonable adjustments to teaching and learning, assessment, professional practice and other activities to address the impact of students' disabilities so that they can participate in their course without posing any risk to the safety of the public.

Many of the activities associated with the professional practice of a registered nurse are time sensitive, where the capacity to perform certain activities within specified time limits is required to reduce or avoid risks to patient safety and wellbeing. The safety and wellbeing of students and the public is always of paramount importance. Students are required to undertake professional practice activities in mixed-gender environments, which reflect the Australian healthcare context.

Students are required to acknowledge that they meet the inherent requirements prior to enrolling in the course, and then prior to enrolling into each professional practice unit. Students who may experience challenges in meeting these requirements because of a disability, chronic health condition or any other reason, are directed to discuss their concerns with the Course Director in the first instance. The [UniAccess](#) team can assist students with a plan for reasonable adjustments in consultation with the Course Director.

The inherent requirements were originally devised by the University of Western Sydney School of Nursing and Midwifery and are used under a creative commons licence. These inherent requirements should be read in conjunction with other course information and NMBA publications such as [Guidelines for Mandatory Notifications](#), [A Nurse's Guide to Professional Boundaries](#) and [Registered Nurse Standards for Practice](#).

### ***Legal Requirements***

*Description:* To practice as a student nurse in Australia you need to meet the requirements of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (National Law) and state and territory legislation. Nursing practice is mandated by specific legislation to enable the safe delivery of care; therefore, students must demonstrate knowledge and compliance with Australian Law, professional regulations, and scope of practice. The following links provide a more detailed understanding of the legislation governing nursing practice:

[Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency social media guidance](#)

[Code of conduct](#)

[Decision-making framework](#)

[Scope of practice and capabilities of nurses and midwives](#)

[English Language skills registration standard](#)

[Health Practitioner Regulation National Law](#)

[ICN Code of Ethics for Nurses](#)

[Mandatory reporting guidelines](#)

[National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards](#)

[Registered Nurse Standards for Practice](#)

*Justification:* These are inherent requirements of all programs leading to eligibility to apply for registration as a Registered Nurse (Division 1) General with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia because:

- Knowledge, understanding, and compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements are necessary pre-requisites to Professional Experience Placement (PEP) to reduce the risk of harm to self and others.
- Compliance with professional regulations and the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (National Law) ensures that students are both responsible and accountable for their practice.

As a student, you must demonstrate that you can:

- Comply with the requirement for student registration with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra).
- Meet the required English language proficiency standard.
- Meet and comply with relevant child protection and safety legislation. For example, a valid Working with Children Check (WCC) and current National Police Check (NPC).
- Meet and comply with all occupational assessment screening and vaccination requirements.

*Adjustments:* Adjustments must be consistent with legislative and regulatory requirements.

### ***Observational Skills /Sensory Capacity***

*Description:* The observational skills required are reliant upon the following sensory capacities:

- Seeing/ Vision
- Hearing/ Auditory
- Touch/Tactile

#### ***Vision***

*Description:* The capacity to demonstrate visual acuity to provide safe and effective nursing care.

*Justification:* These are inherent requirements of all programs leading to eligibility to apply for registration as a Registered Nurse (Division 1) General with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia because:

- Visual acuity is necessary to demonstrate the required range of skills, tasks, and assessments to maintain consistent, accurate and safe care to self and others.
- Visual observations, examination and assessment are fundamental to safe and effective practice.

As a student, you must demonstrate that you can:

- Interpret and respond to visual cues from other students, lecturers, clinicians, patients and significant others during activities related to the program.
- Work in a safe manner in a variety of lighting conditions for example: subdued lighting in a ward and fluorescent lighting in an operating suite.
- Read documentation and medication orders presented in different media for example: electronic medical records or handwritten documents.
- Safely calculate drip rates when administering intravenous fluids.
- Accurately draw up and administer medication.
- Observe and detect changes in wounds.
- Accurately read measurements on multiple devices. For example, blood pressure, temperature and oxygen saturation.
- Identify, distinguish, and appropriately respond between emergency or nurse call systems.
- Detect physical changes in patients. Example respirations, perfusion and recognising anatomical abnormalities.

*Adjustments:* Adjustments must address the need to perform the full range of tasks involved in professional practice. Any strategies to address the effects of the vision impairment must be effective, consistent, and not compromise treatment or safety.

#### Hearing/Auditory

*Description:* The capacity to demonstrate auditory ability to provide safe and effective nursing care.

*Justification:* These are inherent requirements of all programs leading to eligibility to apply for registration as a Registered Nurse (Division 1) General with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia because:

- Auditory ability is necessary to monitor, assess and manage individuals' health needs consistently and accurately.
- Auditory assessments and observations are fundamental to safe and effective nursing practice.

As a student, you must demonstrate that you can:

- Listen to instructions and feedback from multiple sources simultaneously, for example clinical staff, people receiving care and multi-disciplinary staff.
- Differentiate sounds, background noise, alarms, and speech.
- Respond to emergency signals, for example the call bell system, intravenous pump alerts.
- Hear and accurately respond to verbal communication from other students and lecturers during on campus activities related to the program.
- Accurately undertake a blood pressure measurement, listen to heart, lung and bowel sounds by auscultation using a stethoscope.
- Interpret and respond appropriately to telephone conversations.

*Adjustments:* Adjustments must address the need to perform the full range of tasks involved in professional practice. Any strategies to address the effects of the hearing impairment must be effective, consistent, and not compromise treatment or safety.

#### Touch/Tactile

*Description:* The capacity to demonstrate tactile ability to perform competent and safe nursing care.

*Justification:* These are inherent requirements of all programs leading to eligibility to apply for registration as a Registered Nurse (Division 1) General with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia because:

- Tactile ability is necessary to monitor, assess and detect physical characteristics of a person and act on any abnormalities detected to provide thorough nursing care.
- Tactile assessments and observations are fundamental to safe and effective practice.

As a student, you must demonstrate that you can:

- Detect changes in circulation observations e.g., temperature and pulse via palpation.
- Conduct a physical assessment and detect any anatomical abnormalities e.g., a distended bladder, heat that may indicate infection.

*Adjustments:* Adjustments must maintain the capacity to make effective assessments of physical characteristics and detect abnormalities within safe time frames.

### ***Communication Skills***

*Description:* These are inherent requirements of all programs leading to eligibility to apply for registration as a Registered Nurse (Division 1) General with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia. Communication skills required are:

- Verbal
- Nonverbal
- Written
- Language

#### **Verbal**

*Description:* The capacity to demonstrate respectful, effective and efficient verbal communication in English to ensure the provision of safe care:

- The ability to understand and respond to verbal communication accurately and appropriately to provide safe and timely nursing care.
- Timely, accurate and effective communication is critical to individual safety, treatment, and management.

*Justification:* These are inherent requirements of all programs leading to eligibility to apply for registration as a Registered Nurse (Division 1) General with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia because:

- Communication with a person receiving care may be limited to verbal because of a cognitive or physical condition (e.g., injury, disease).
- The ability to provide clear instructions and information in the context of the situation.
- Providing safe nursing care is reliant upon accurate and effective communication with multidisciplinary healthcare professionals.

As a student you must demonstrate that you can:

- Participate in classroom, clinical discussion and simulation (one-to-one and in groups).

- Respond appropriately to a care request in the clinical environment.
- Demonstrate ability to communicate with other health professionals e.g., clinical handover (one to one and in groups), seeking assistance with a person whose health is deteriorating.
- Construct with accuracy, verbal handover reports related to care in the clinical environment.
- Present information appropriately and interactively in a group situation face to face or online.
- Use language that is appropriate to the context of the individual or group.
- Communicate in a respectful, clear, attentive, empathetic, honest, and nonjudgmental manner.
- Respond professionally to requests from people receiving care, significant others, supervisors, academics, and other health professionals in the clinical and simulated setting.

*Adjustments:* Adjustments must address effectiveness, timeliness, clarity, and accuracy issues to ensure safety.

### Nonverbal

*Description:* The capacity to demonstrate effective non-verbal communication is fundamental to nursing and needs to be respectful, clear, attentive, empathetic, honest, and non-judgmental. Students must demonstrate:

- The capacity to recognise, interpret and respond appropriately to nonverbal cues.
- Consistent and appropriate awareness of nonverbal cues.
- Sensitivity to individual differences.

*Justification:* These are inherent requirements of all programs leading to eligibility to apply for registration as a Registered Nurse (Division 1) General with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia because:

- The ability to observe and understand non-verbal cues assists with building rapport with people and gaining their trust and respect in academic, work, and professional relationships.
- Displaying consistent and appropriate facial expressions, eye contact, being mindful of space, time boundaries and body movements and gestures promotes trust in academic, work, and professional relationships.
- Communication may be restricted to non-verbal behaviours. Being sensitive to individual differences displays respect and empathy to others and develops trusting relationships.
- The ability to observe and understand non-verbal cues is essential for the safe and effective observation of symptoms and reactions to facilitate the assessment and treatment of people receiving care.

As a student, you must demonstrate that you can:

- Recognise and respond appropriately in all learning environments.
- Maintain consistent and appropriate facial expressions, eye contact, being mindful of space, time boundaries and body movements and gestures.
- Interpret distress, a change in mood, activity, or posture.
- Communicate in a respectful, clear, attentive, empathetic, honest, and nonjudgmental manner.
- Respond professionally to requests from people receiving care, their significant others, supervisors, and other health professionals in the clinical and simulated setting.

*Adjustments:* Adjustments must enable the recognition, appropriate response, or initiation of effective nonverbal communication in a timely and appropriate manner.

### Written

*Description:* The capacity to demonstrate:

- Effective written communication that is a fundamental responsibility with professional and legal ramifications.
- Construction of coherent written communication appropriate to the circumstances.

*Justification:* These are inherent requirements of all programs leading to eligibility to apply for registration as a Registered Nurse (Division 1) General with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia because:

- Construction of multiple assessments to academic and clinical standards are required to convey knowledge and understanding of relevant subject matter, procedures, and professional practice.
- Accurate written communication, including record-keeping and patient notes, is vital to provide consistent and safe patient care.

As a student, you must demonstrate that you can:

- Construct assessment to academic and clinical standards with attention to grammar and punctuation.
- Express complex and detailed information and knowledge into a logical and easily understood written form for assessment requirements.
- Construct written text-based assessment tasks to reflect the required academic and clinical standards are necessary to convey knowledge and understanding of relevant subject matter for professional practice.
- Construct legible documentation in a manner that clearly communicates the intended message and meets professional expectations for safety of the person receiving care.
- Professionally document in charts and records in the simulated environment and clinical environments meeting legal and professional requirements, while ensuring confidentiality.

*Adjustments:* Adjustments must meet necessary standards of clarity, accuracy, and accessibility to ensure effective recording and transmission of information in both academic and clinical settings.

### Language

*Description:* The capacity to demonstrate:

- Competent literacy skills essential to provide safe and effective delivery of care.
- The ability to accurately acquire information and accurately convey appropriate effective messages.
- The ability to read and comprehend a range of literature and information.
- The capacity to understand and implement academic conventions and to construct written text in a scholarly manner.

*Justification:* These are inherent requirements of all programs leading to eligibility to apply for registration as a Registered Nurse (Division 1) General with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia because:

- The ability to acquire information and to accurately convey messages is fundamental to ensure safe and effective assessment, treatment, and delivery of care.
- The ability to read, decode, interpret, and comprehend multiple sources of information is fundamental for the safe and effective delivery of care.

As a student, you must demonstrate that you can:

- Provide evidence demonstrating English Language proficiency upon enrolment.
- Read information in a variety of formats, for example handwritten notes, printed text, graphs and diagrams.
- Paraphrase, summarise and reference in accordance with appropriate academic conventions.
- Produce accurate, concise, and clear nursing documentation which meets legal requirements.

*Adjustments:* Adjustments to address literacy issues must attend to the capacity to effectively acquire, comprehend, apply, and communicate accurate information.

### **Motor Skills**

*Description:* The core motor skill is the capacity to demonstrate manual dexterity which is reliant on developed gross and fine motor skills. Nursing involves physical demands and requires gross motor function including assisting people receiving care to weight bear, manual handling, transferring people, moving equipment, and manoeuvring around equipment in confined spaces. Actions include squatting, twisting, bending, kneeling, pushing, and pulling. Nursing requires fine motor skills and dexterity including manipulating instruments, using hand eye coordination to complete tasks as necessary. Actions include grasping, pressing, pushing, turning, and squeezing to provide safe and effective care.

*Justification:* These are inherent requirements of all programs leading to eligibility to apply for registration as a Registered Nurse (Division 1) General with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia because performing these tasks consistently and safely is required to reduce the risk of harm to self and others in providing safe nursing care to people in a variety of settings.

As a student you must demonstrate that you can:

- Maintain balance while safely mobilising and transferring individuals.
- Perform procedures such as aseptic wound dressing, suctioning an airway, connecting monitoring equipment.
- Stand for the majority of time during a simulated or clinical experience.
- Pull, push, squat, kneel, twist, bend, lift and carry.
- Move with ease around patients' bedsides, bathrooms, and equipment items, while performing delivery of care activities and responding to emergency situations.
- Safely retrieve, utilise and replenish stock and equipment.
- Manipulate intricate surgical instruments and equipment while dressing a wound.
- Manipulate syringes and needles during preparation and administration of medications (oral, SC, IM, IV) addressing safety to self and others.
- Prime an intravenous infusion line and accurately inserting and setting the prescribed rates on an infusion device.



*Adjustments:* Adjustments should facilitate functional effectiveness to enable safety to self and others and a capacity to provide appropriate care.

### ***Behavioural and Social Skills***

*Description:* The core behavioural and social skills required is the capacity to function effectively and sensitively in a demanding and diverse academic and clinical environment. Core behavioural and social skills required in nursing include:

- Ethical behaviour.
- Effectiveness in uncertain and stressful situations.
- Sufficient self-awareness to manage fluctuations in health and emotional status.
- The ability to function effectively in teams.

Behavioural and social skills are a core requirement of the program because nurses are accountable and responsible for ensuring professional standards of behaviour in all contexts and meeting legal and regulatory standards to enable safe delivery of healthcare. Behavioural standards are evidenced by compliance with the policies of both academic and placements and of the professional accrediting body for the nursing program.

*Justification:* These are inherent requirements of all programs leading to eligibility to apply for registration as a Registered Nurse (Division 1) General with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia because nursing students work in changing and unpredictable environments. Nurses and nursing students are accountable and responsible for ensuring professional standards of behaviour and social skills in professional practice and on placement. These are requirements of the professional accrediting body.

As a student, you must demonstrate that you can:

- Respect and provide culturally safe and appropriate care.
- Be receptive and respectful to different viewpoints, to constructive feedback and to direction from academics and clinical staff.
- Interact positively and effectively in groups with other students while attending activities related to the program.
- Participate in all on-line and face-to-face discussion forums and tutorials with peers and academics, simulated learning environments and when undertaking Professional Experience Placement (PEP).
- Critically reflect on practice and respond appropriately to constructive feedback.
- Maintain professional boundaries communicating professionally and respectfully with or about people receiving care, significant others, colleagues, academics, and employers.
- Use respectful language and tone and not present information that is false, misleading, or deceptive.
- Function effectively in a frequently demanding role.
- Work constructively in a diverse and changing academic and clinical environment.
- Work individually and as part of a team in unpredictable environments.
- Manage events that include human distress objectively and professionally.
- Monitor and manage own emotions and behaviour effectively when providing care.



- Comply with policies, guidelines and codes of conduct which facilitate professional interactions in all on-line and face-to-face discussion forums and tutorials with peers and academics, simulated learning environments and when undertaking PEP.
- Demonstrate understanding that inappropriate use of social media can result in harm to people receiving care and the profession, particularly given the changing nature of privacy and the capacity for material to be posted by others.

*Adjustments:* Reasonable adjustment must support stable, effective, and professional behaviour in both academic and clinical settings. Adjustments must not compromise the policies, codes, and standards of behaviour.

### ***Cognitive Capacity***

*Description:* The core cognitive skill reliant upon the following cognitive capacity is numeracy.

*Justification:* These are inherent requirements of all programs leading to eligibility to apply for registration as a Registered Nurse (Division 1) General with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia because information literacy skills are the basis for evidence-based practice. Safe and effective care is based on comprehensive knowledge that must be recalled, understood, and applied appropriately. Students must be able to accurately acquire information and convey appropriate, effective messages. Students must be able to identify problems, create and implement management plans, and evaluate outcomes within defined timeframes.

As a student, you must demonstrate that you can:

- Interpret and act on assessment data to formulate a safe plan of care in the clinical and simulated environments.
- Recall formulae for medication calculations and apply to safe medication administration.
- Apply theoretical knowledge to practice.

*Adjustments:* Adjustments must ensure that a clear demonstration of knowledge and intellectual skills are not compromised or impeded.

### ***Sustained Performance***

*Description:* The core sustainable performance skill is the capacity to demonstrate maintenance of physical, mental, and emotional performance over extended periods of time.

*Justification:* These are inherent requirements of all programs leading to eligibility to apply for registration as a Registered Nurse (Division 1) General with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia because nurses must be able to perform activities with a level of concentration that ensures a capacity to focus on the activity until it is completed appropriately. Nurses are required to care for people with acute and complex needs, respond to unpredictable workload demands and to be flexible around taking rest periods and breaks due to the unpredictable nature of the work.

As a student, you must demonstrate that you can:

- Provide care for people with complex needs and who may exhibit unpredictable responses during an assigned period of duty.

- Perform multiple or repetitive tasks during an assigned period of duty with a level of concentration that ensures a capacity to focus on the care of the patient until it is completed appropriately.
- Maintain sustained performance across multiple shifts, including day, evening, nights and may include weekends and public holidays.

*Adjustments:* Reasonable adjustments must support the completion of full shifts per day of PEP and ensure the sustainability or maintenance of consistent and safe performance within the environment of a clinical setting.