

STANDARDS FOR
NURSING EDUCATION

AND

STANDARDS FOR
ADVANCED PRACTICE NURSE
EDUCATION

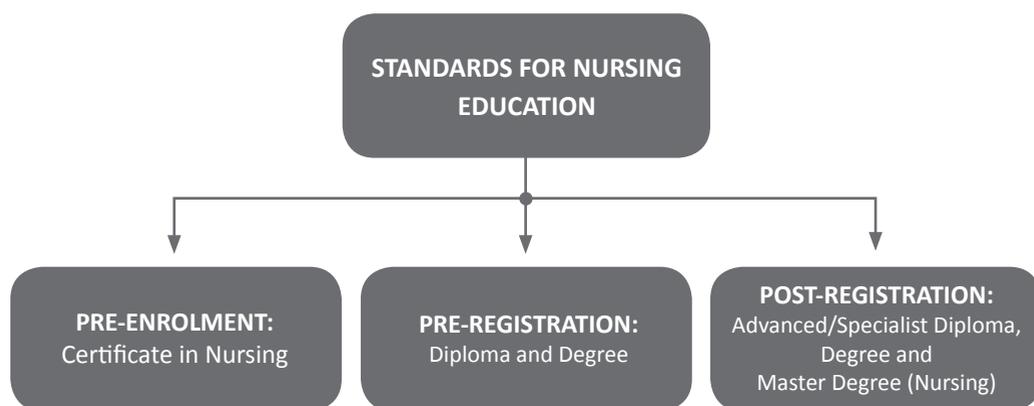


SINGAPORE NURSING BOARD

Preface

The Nurses and Midwives Act (Chapter 209) [May 2000] empowers Singapore Nursing Board (SNB) to make regulations for matters relating to the accreditation of educational programmes in nursing and midwifery, and institutions providing these programmes.

The Standards for Nursing Education and Advanced Practice (APN) Education established by SNB form the basis for monitoring, maintaining and evaluating the quality of nursing and midwifery educational programmes; and provides guidance for the development of innovative, practice-oriented nursing education for pre-enrolment, pre-registration and post-registration levels.



The educational preparation and the practice of nursing have undergone radical changes in response to evolving healthcare needs and expectations. Competencies required to provide quality and safe professional care must be refined by evidence-based practice underpinned by grounded educational standards and criteria.

The Standards for Nursing Education and APN Education have been reviewed to support the required changes in nursing education and practice. Each standard has identified measurable criteria. The document will serve as a framework for accreditation/evaluation of all nursing and midwifery programmes.

*Registrar
Singapore Nursing Board
1 September 2011*

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STANDARDS

FOR

NURSING EDUCATION

Standard One:

The Institution – Organisation And Responsibilities --- ---

The institution that provides education for nurses shall ensure policies and practices meet the Standards for Nursing Education of the Singapore Nursing Board (SNB).

Criteria

- 1.1 The institution seeking accreditation of the nursing programme(s) shall be registered with the Ministry of Education (MOE) as a recognised education provider.
- 1.2 The institution's mission, philosophy and purpose support professional development of the learners.
- 1.3 The organisation chart delineates authority, responsibility, accountability and communication at all levels in the institution.
- 1.4 Authority for oversight of the programme is delegated to a Registered Nurse qualified to serve as Head of the School/ Department offering the nursing programme(s).
- 1.5 The Head shall be responsible for maintaining organizational standards and regulatory requirements in all aspects of the programme as stipulated by SNB.
- 1.6 There is evidence that current written policies and procedures guide the programme administration, management and evaluation.
- 1.7 A record of the learner's education in the programme maintained for verification shall include :
 - (i) academic results; and
 - (ii) credit hours in the classroom, laboratory and clinical placement.
- 1.8 There is a policy to guide the process when the institution collaborates with other educational institutions and where there is transfer of educational credits.
- 1.9 The institution shall submit the detailed curriculum of a new programme for approval by SNB at least six (6) months before implementation of the programme.
- 1.10 The institution seeking re-accreditation of the programme shall submit the revised curriculum to SNB six (6) months prior to end of the accreditation period.

Standard Two:

Curriculum – Programme Design And Development --- ---

The curriculum design ensures outcomes of the programme are consistent with the mission and philosophy of the institution. The curriculum provides correlated theory and practice to prepare graduates with a level of competence required for safe effective nursing care at the level relevant to the programme offered.

Criteria

- 2.1 The programme shall specify the:
 - (i) selection of learners with appropriate educational qualifications;
 - (ii) requirements for learners to be certified medically and physically fit to pursue the programme; and
 - (iii) eligibility of the learners to meet the requirements for registration by the SNB (where applicable).
- 2.2 The curriculum is written in consultation with Nurse Educators and Nurses in practice. The Curriculum Development Committee should have at least two (2) members who have prior training and/or experience in curriculum development.
- 2.3 The curriculum provides evidence of:
 - (i) a conceptual framework;
 - (ii) a focus on the nursing response to healthcare needs of the community in accordance with healthcare policies;
 - (iii) nursing as the primary focus of the programme;
 - (iv) integration of theory with practice; and
 - (v) teaching and learning strategies that enable the development of clinical reasoning, problem-solving and critical thinking to achieve the expected outcomes of the programme.
- 2.4 There is evidence of:
 - (i) an implementation plan for the programme;
 - (ii) a logical sequence of learning experiences;
 - (iii) learning outcomes and competencies for acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes;
 - (iv) clinical practice placements to facilitate interaction between learners and clients to achieve the stated learning outcomes; and
 - (v) appropriate methods of assessment to reflect achievement of expected outcomes specific to the programme.

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- 2.5 There is written evidence of commitment from the health care industry to accept learners for clinical placements.
- 2.6 There is sufficient and appropriate clinical experience for learners to achieve the stated learning outcomes.
- 2.7 The clinical placement allows for purposeful/focused learning where the learner is guided/supervised in the application and integration of knowledge and skills, and acquisition of professional attitudes.
- 2.8 The programme's learning outcomes and competencies shall cover the following areas:
- (i) safe competent professional and ethical practice;
 - (ii) holistic approach to integration of knowledge, organisation and management of care;
 - (iii) effective interpersonal relationships and communication;
 - (iv) personal leadership and professional development.
- 2.9 There is evidence of representation from the institution and nurses in practice to review/revise the course/programme. The validity of the accreditation per course/programme is 3-5 years as tabled below:

Course/Programme Duration	Accreditation Periods
less than 2 years	3 years
2 years – less than 3 years	4 years
3 years and above	5 years

[Note: SNB reserves the right to conduct more frequent reviews or shorten the accreditation period on a case by case basis. This includes courses/programmes which are lacking in specific expectations as required by the SNB Standards for Nursing Education.]

- 2.10 There is systematic and continuous evaluation of all curriculum components to ensure an ongoing development, maintenance and enhancement of the curriculum.

Standard Three: Assessment

The assessment and evaluation of learning is a continuous process of providing feedback on the learners' progress and learning outcomes.

Criteria

- 3.1 The assessment of learning:
 - (i) is based on a variety of strategies that are aligned with the subject area, stage of the educational programme and expected learning outcomes;
 - (ii) measures the integration and application of knowledge, skills and attitude to patient care throughout the programme; and
 - (iii) has explicit grading criteria for each module/unit.
- 3.2 The institution shall establish an Examination Committee with clearly defined functions, including a grading system based on the modular credit system for academic programmes.
- 3.3 There is evidence of formative and summative assessment.
- 3.4 The faculty responsible for assessment shall have professional preparation in assessment and evaluation. The assessors shall have experience/expertise in the subject area.
- 3.5 Evaluation outcomes are used for development, improvement and planning future learning opportunities for learners.

Standard Four:

Teaching Faculty

The institution has sufficient and qualified faculty to provide leadership, teach and guide learners to attain the goals and outcomes of the nursing programme.

Criteria

- 4.1 Teaching faculty have minimum relevant academic/professional qualifications in advance of the award offered by the programme (as stated in Table on pages 20-21).
- 4.2 Only Registered Nurses with valid Practising Certificate issued by SNB can teach the nursing content in the programme.
- 4.3 Nursing faculty teaching in:
 - (i) pre-enrolment/pre-registration programme shall have a minimum of three (3) years full-time post-registration clinical nursing experience; and
 - (ii) specialty nursing programmes shall have relevant specialist qualification(s) and a minimum of two (2) years full-time post-specialty qualification clinical nursing experience relevant to the discipline.
- 4.4 Teaching faculty (full-time and part-time) shall show evidence of undertaking/completion of a preparation programme/course in teaching and learning.
- 4.5 Faculty teaching non-nursing subjects shall possess appropriate professional qualifications and experience relevant to the areas of their expertise and responsibilities.
- 4.6 Clinical teachers providing clinical supervision shall be competent and current Registered Nurses with a minimum of three (3) years full-time post-registration clinical nursing experience, and possess valid Practising Certificate issued by SNB.

- 4.7 For optimal student learning and safe patient care, the clinical teacher to learner ratio in the clinical settings shall not exceed 1:12.
- 4.8 There shall be evidence of currency of nursing competencies and continuing education for academic faculty and clinical teachers.
- 4.9 The performance of teaching faculty is evaluated periodically to assure ongoing competence and development.
- 4.10 There shall be a minimum of 60% full-time academic staff teaching the programme.

Standard Five: **Educational Resources**

The educational institution has adequate appropriate facilities and resources to support the programme objectives and outcomes.

Criteria

5.1 The institution:

- (i) has evidence stating the allocation of human and fiscal resources to support the development and implementation of the programme;
- (ii) has comprehensive physical resources (e.g. classrooms, laboratories, equipment, library resources, instructional technology facilities, offices) that are current and accessible to faculty and learners to enable the achievement of programme outcomes and to meet the needs of faculty and learners;
- (iii) provides and maintains a conducive learning environment.

5.2 There is evidence of:

- (i) availability of adequate and current collection of literature on nursing and related subjects, including on-line facilities for sourcing such materials for students and academic staff;
- (ii) adequate and current audio-visual aids for effective teaching-learning activities.

***STANDARDS FOR
ADVANCED PRACTICE NURSE EDUCATION***

Standard One: **The Institution - Organisation and Responsibilities** --- ---

The institution that provides education for nurses shall ensure policies and practices meet the Standards for Advanced Practice Nurse Education of the Singapore Nursing Board (SNB).

Criteria

- 1.1 The institution seeking accreditation of the nursing programme(s) shall be registered with the Ministry of Education (MOE) as a recognised education provider.
- 1.2 The institution's mission, philosophy and purpose support professional development of the learners.
- 1.3 The organisation chart delineates authority, responsibility, accountability and communication at all levels in the institution.
- 1.4 The Head of the Advanced Practice Nurse (APN) programme is a SNB-certified APN or equivalent with PhD and is responsible for the overall leadership of the APN programme.
 - 1.4.1 The lead APN faculty member for each specialised branch of nursing is SNB-certified in the same specialised branch of nursing and provides direct oversight for the educational component of the APN programme.
- 1.5 The Head shall be responsible for maintaining organizational standards and regulatory requirements in all aspects of the programme as stipulated by SNB.
- 1.6 There is evidence that current written policies and procedures guide the programme administration, management and evaluation.
- 1.7 A record of the learner's education in the programme maintained for verification shall include:
 - (i) academic results; and
 - (ii) credit hours in the classroom, laboratory and clinical placement;
 - (iii) The official transcript states the clinical specialty of the graduate's educational preparation.

- 1.8 There is a policy to guide the process when the institution collaborates with other educational institutions and where there is transfer of educational credits.
- 1.9 The institution shall submit the detailed curriculum of a new programme for approval by SNB at least six (6) months before implementation of the programme.
- 1.10 The institution seeking re-accreditation of the programme shall submit the revised curriculum to SNB six (6) months prior to end of the accreditation period.

Standard Two: **Curriculum - Programme Design & Development** --- ---

The curriculum design ensures outcomes of the programme are consistent with the mission and philosophy of the institution. The curriculum provides correlated theory and practice to prepare the graduate to be eligible for SNB APN certification for each specialised branch of nursing. The curriculum is congruent with SNB Scope of Practice and Competencies of APN.

Criteria

- 2.1 The programme shall specify the:
 - (i) selection of learners with appropriate educational qualifications and clinical experience for admission;
 - (ii) requirements for learners to be certified medically and physically fit to pursue the programme; and
 - (iii) eligibility of the learners to meet the requirements for registration by the SNB (where applicable).
- 2.2 The Curriculum Development Committee should have at least two (2) members who have prior training and/or experience in curriculum development in addition to APN faculty members and practising APNs.
- 2.3 The curriculum provides evidence of:
 - (i) a conceptual framework;
 - (ii) a focus on the nursing response to healthcare needs of the community in accordance with healthcare policies;
 - (iii) nursing as the primary focus of the programme;
 - (iv) integration of theory with practice; and
 - (v) teaching and learning strategies that enable the development of clinical reasoning, problem-solving and critical thinking to achieve the expected outcomes of the programme.
- 2.4 There is evidence of:
 - (i) an implementation plan for the programme;
 - (ii) a logical sequence of learning experiences;
 - (iii) learning outcomes and competencies for acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes;

- (iv) the curriculum shall include the following content:
 - (a) Advanced practice nursing core modules
 - Advanced health assessment
 - Advanced physiology and pathophysiology
 - Advanced pharmacology
 - (b) Speciality curriculum content
 - Specialty content
 - 500 hours of direct clinical practice in specialised areas
 - (c) Graduate nursing core content
 - Research
 - Evidence-based practice
 - Policy, organisation, healthcare financing
 - Ethics
 - Law
 - Professional role development
 - Theoretical foundations of nursing practice
 - Human diversity and social issues
 - Health promotion and disease prevention

References:

1. *American Association of Colleges of Nursing. (1996). The Essentials of Master's Education for Advanced Practice Nursing*
2. *Criteria for Evaluation of Nurse Practitioner Programs 2008 – A report of the National Task Force on Quality Nurse Practitioner Education*

- (v) clinical practice placements to facilitate interaction between learners and clients to achieve the stated learning outcomes; and
 - (vi) appropriate methods of assessment to reflect achievement of expected outcomes specific to the programme.
- 2.5 There is written evidence of commitment from the health care industry to accept learners for clinical placements.
- 2.6 There is sufficient and relevant clinical experience for learners to achieve the stated learning outcomes.

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- 2.7 The clinical placement allows for purposeful/focused learning where the learner is guided/ supervised in the application and integration of knowledge and skills, and acquisition of professional attitudes.
- 2.8 There is evidence of APN faculty members from the institution and APNs in practice to review/revise the programme. The validity of the accreditation per course/programme is 3-5 years as tabled below:

Course/Programme Duration	Accreditation Periods
less than 2 years	3 years
2 years – less than 3 years	4 years
3 years and above	5 years

[Note: SNB reserves the right to shorten the accreditation period on a case by case basis.]

- 2.9 There is systematic and continuous evaluation of all curriculum components to ensure an ongoing development, maintenance and enhancement of the curriculum.

Standard Three: Assessment

The assessment and evaluation of learning is a continuous process of providing feedback on the learners' progress and learning outcomes.

Criteria

- 3.1 The assessment of learning:
 - (i) is based on a variety of strategies that are aligned with the subject area, stage of the educational programme and expected learning outcomes;
 - (ii) measures the integration and application of knowledge, skills and attitude to patient care throughout the programme; and
 - (iii) has explicit grading criteria for each module/unit.
- 3.2 The institution shall establish an Examination Committee with clearly defined functions, including a grading system based on the modular credit system for academic programmes.
- 3.3 There is evidence of formative and summative assessment.
- 3.4 The faculty responsible for assessment shall have professional preparation in assessment and evaluation. The assessors shall have experience/expertise in the subject area.
- 3.5 Evaluation outcomes are used for development, improvement and planning future learning opportunities for learners.

Standard Four: **Teaching Faculty**

The institution has sufficient and qualified faculty to provide leadership, teach and guide learners to attain the goals and outcomes of the nursing programme.

Criteria

- 4.1 Teaching faculty have minimum relevant academic/professional qualifications in advance of the award offered by the programme (as stated in Table on page 20-21).
- 4.2 Nursing faculty teaching in the APN programme:
 - (i) have a minimum of PhD/Doctorate in Nursing (Clinical Specialty) or Master in Nursing (Clinical Specialty) and working towards Doctorate in Nursing
 - (ii) possess a valid APN Practising Certificate issued by SNB with a minimum of five (5) years full-time experience as certified APNs in order to teach APN nursing-specific content.
- 4.3 Teaching faculty (full-time and part-time) shall show evidence of undertaking/ completion of a preparation programme/course in teaching and learning.
- 4.4 Faculty teaching non-nursing subjects shall possess appropriate professional qualifications and experience relevant to the areas of their expertise and responsibilities.
- 4.5 The clinical preceptors providing clinical supervision shall be competent and current APNs with a minimum of five (5) years full-time experience as certified APNs and possess valid APN Practising Certificate issued by SNB or qualified medical specialists in the area for which the APN is training.
- 4.6 The clinical preceptor to learner ratio in the clinical settings does not exceed 1:2 to ensure quality of clinical learning.
- 4.7 APN faculty teaching in clinical courses shall maintain currency in clinical practice.
- 4.8 The performance of teaching faculty is evaluated periodically to assure ongoing competence and development.
- 4.9 There is a sufficient mix of full-time and part-time faculty to adequately support the professional role development and clinical teaching for APN practice.

Standard Five:

Educational Resources

The educational institution has adequate appropriate facilities and resources to support the programme objectives and outcomes.

Criteria

5.1 The institution:

- (i) has evidence stating the allocation of human and fiscal resources to support the development and implementation of the programme;
- (ii) has comprehensive physical resources (e.g. classrooms, laboratories, equipment, library resources, instructional technology facilities, offices) that are current and accessible to faculty and learners to enable the achievement of programme outcomes and to meet the needs of faculty and learners;
- (iii) provides and maintains a conducive learning environment.

5.2 There is evidence of:

- (i) availability of adequate and current collection of literature on nursing and related subjects, including on-line facilities for sourcing such materials for students and academic staff;
- (ii) adequate and current audio-visual aids for effective teaching-learning activities.

Singapore Nursing Board

Criteria for Accreditation of Nursing Programmes

Type of Programme	Duration	Clinical Component
Pre-enrolment Certificate in Nursing	2 years (Full-Time)	*Clinical practice placement comprises at least 30 weeks. Theory shall be sufficient to meet objectives of the curriculum.
Pre-registration Diploma in Nursing	3 years (Full-Time)	*Clinical practice placement comprises at least 30 weeks. Theory shall be sufficient to meet objectives of the curriculum.
Undergraduate Degree in Nursing	3 years (Full-Time) 4 years for Honours (Full Time)	*Clinical practice placement comprises at least 30 weeks. Theory shall be sufficient to meet objectives of the curriculum.
Advanced Diploma in Nursing	Full-Time (minimum 8 months) or Part-Time	Clinical component comprises 50% (minimum 400 hours) of total curriculum hours allocated for *clinical placement. Theory shall be sufficient to meet objectives of the curriculum.
Graduate Diploma (Nursing Specialty)	Full/Part-Time	Minimum 50% of curriculum hours allocated for *clinical practice placement. Theory shall be sufficient to meet objectives of the curriculum.
Degree in Nursing (Post-Registration)	Full-Time (1 year) Part-Time (2 years)	Theory shall be sufficient to meet objectives of the curriculum (including clinical application).
Master in Nursing (leading to APN certification)	Full-Time (minimum 18 months)	A minimum of 500 supervised clinical hours in the area of practice that the APN will be certified in. Theory shall be sufficient to meet objectives of the curriculum.

Note:

- + Any variations to the requirement will be subject to SNB's approval.
- * SNB shall accredit clinical practice areas.
- △ Subject to further review by SNB.

Type of Programme	Duration	Clinical & Theoretical Component
Short Nursing Programme	3 – 6 months	Minimum theory component shall be 100 hours and minimum clinical practice laboratory component shall be 100 hours.

Note:

- SNB shall accredit short nursing programmes for the purposes of registration and enrolment.
- SNB shall accredit clinical areas, if applicable.

Educational Setting	Minimum Qualifications ⁺ of Nursing Faculty
Institute of Technical Education, or equivalent local provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Diploma/Degree in Nursing, and ii) Relevant teaching experience/ qualification
Tertiary Academic Institution, or equivalent local provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Degree in Nursing, and ii) Relevant teaching experience/ qualification
University located in Singapore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Master Degree in Nursing (preferred), or a minimum of Degree in Nursing & Master Degree in related field, and ii) Relevant teaching experience/ qualification
Tertiary Academic Institution, or equivalent local provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Degree in Nursing, and ii) Nursing specialty qualification, and iii) Relevant teaching experience/ qualification
Tertiary Academic Institution, minimum University status at local campus or in collaboration with local provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Master Degree in Nursing, and ii) Nursing specialty qualification, and iii) Relevant teaching experience/ qualification
Tertiary Academic Institution minimum University status at local campus or in collaboration with local provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Master Degree in Nursing (preferred), or a minimum of Degree in Nursing & Master Degree in related field, and ii) Relevant teaching experience/ qualification
Tertiary Academic Institution at local University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) PhD/ Doctorate in Nursing (Clinical Specialty) or Master in Nursing (Clinical Specialty) and working towards Doctorate in Nursing, and ii) possess a valid APN Practising Certificate issued by SNB with a minimum of 5 years^A full-time experience as certified APNs in order to teach APN-specific content, and iii) Relevant teaching experience/ qualification

Educational Setting	Minimum Qualifications of Programme Facilitator
Hospital/ institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Diploma in Nursing or equivalent, and ii) Nursing specialty qualification, and iii) Relevant teaching experience/ qualification

Glossary

Accreditation	The process by which a statutory body scrutinises and evaluates an institution, programme or curriculum as meeting the required standards necessary for providing an education service as set by the regulatory body.
Admission	The process based on defined criteria which allows the student to enter the programme of nursing or midwifery education.
Advanced Practice Nurse	The Advanced Practice Nurse (APN) is a Registered Nurse (RN) who has attained the expert knowledge base, complex decision-making skills and clinical competencies for extended practice. The entry to APN practice is education at the Master in Nursing (Clinical Specialty) level. All graduates of the Master programme must satisfy the APN certification requirements of the SNB before they are eligible to apply for certification as APNs.
APN Clinical Preceptor	A certified APN with at least 5 years of post-certification experience who provides direct supervision, teaching and assessment of the learner in the APN programme so as to ensure that the learners achieve the intended objectives of the clinical experience.
APN programme	A structured course of study leading to formal qualification at the minimum Masters degree level that prepares APNs. Graduates of SNB-accredited APN programme are eligible for certification as APNs with SNB.
Assessment	An evaluation method, process and record.
Clinical Placement	Part of the education process which takes place in any practice setting in hospitals or the community.
Clinical Teacher	A current practising Registered Nurse employed by the institution to provide clinical instruction, supervision and assessment of students' clinical performance.
Competency	A broad composite statement which describes a framework of professional skills reflecting the knowledge, attitudes, psychosocial and psychomotor elements for professional nursing and midwifery practice.
Credit hours	The total number of hours undertaken by students that count towards credit points (e.g. face-to-face contact, self-directed learning, e-learning).
Curriculum	The totality of the education programme that is coherent in structure, processes and outcomes which link theory to practice in the professional educational preparation of a nurse, midwife or APN.
Evaluation	The process used to determine the standard and success of a programme or curriculum in order to make modifications to develop maintain or enhance the programme/ curriculum.
Experience	Knowledge, skills and attitudes derived from participation in related professional practice.

Expertise	A high level of specialised knowledge, proficiency or skills.
Faculty	People who teach in the educational institution, or in a department of a college or university.
Institution	An institution refers to an organization providing nursing education programmes at the University, Polytechnic, Institute of Technical Education or equivalent establishment.
Nursing Programme	All nursing programmes ranging from certificate to post-graduate programmes.
Outcome	Result or effect of completion of the educational programme.
Professional Development	The process of maintaining or expanding knowledge or skills specific to the nursing and midwifery practice.
Programme	A structured course of study leading to formal qualification.
Registration	A process by which the regulatory authority validates that nurses or midwives have successfully completed a recognised nursing and/or midwifery education programme(s) before they are allowed to practice nursing and/ or midwifery in Singapore.
School	An organisational unit or department within an educational institution or a university.
Short Nursing Programme	A structured course of study leading to Certificate of Attendance/recognition of special skills or competence.
Singapore Nursing Board (SNB)	The Singapore Nursing Board (SNB), as a statutory authority established under the Nurses and Midwives Act, is charged with protecting the safety of the public through regulating the standards of training and education, scope of practice, and professional conduct and ethics of nurses, midwives and APNs in Singapore.
Specialised branch of nursing	Refers to area of practice that APNs are certified to practise.
Standard	Statement of a defined level of quality, which articulates the expectations of the learning outcomes of the programme.
Teaching experience	Teaching experience may include formal teaching in a classroom setting, in-service teaching, conducting workshops, recognized as a preceptor/clinical instructor/ nurse educator.
The Nurses and Midwives Act (Chapter 209)	A law passed by the Singapore Parliament that establishes the Singapore Nursing Board (SNB) for the purposes of registration and enrolment of nurses, registration of midwives and certification of Advanced Practice Nurses. The Act empowers SNB to regulate standards for the education and the practice of nurses and midwives; and related matters.

Acknowledgement

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Singapore Nursing Board
Operating Office Address:
81 Kim Keat Road #08-00
Singapore 328836
Tel: 6478 5400/1 Fax: 6353 3460