

# **STANDARDS FOR NURSING EDUCATION**

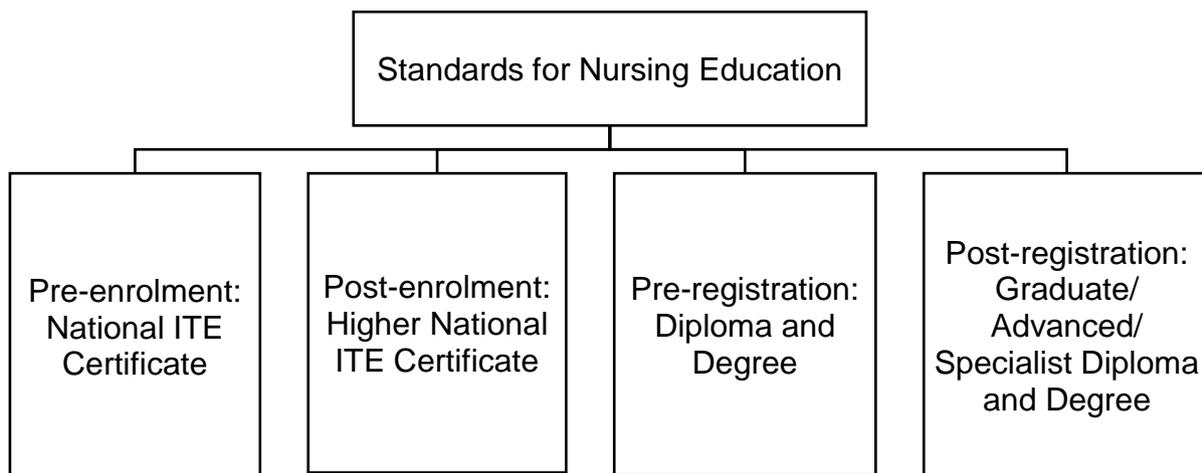


**SINGAPORE NURSING BOARD**

# INTRODUCTION

The Nurses and Midwives Act (Cap 209) (2012 Revised edition) empowers the Singapore Nursing Board (SNB) to regulate standards for the education and training of Registered Nurses, Enrolled Nurses, Registered Midwives and Registered Nurse (Psychiatric). SNB's role and function in nursing education regulation are to accredit and approve educational programmes in nursing and midwifery, and the institutions providing these programme. Professional programme accreditation is concerned with determining the quality and integrity of nursing programmes in the interest of public trust and safety. Accreditation assures the public that nurses have achieved agreed professional outcomes and competencies through completion of an accredited nursing programme.

The educational preparation and the practice of nursing have undergone transformative changes in response to evolving healthcare needs and expectations. The Standards for Nursing Education provide guidance for the development of innovative, practice-oriented nursing and midwifery education for pre-enrolment, post-enrolment, pre-registration and post-registration levels.



The guidelines and accreditation requirements outlined in SNB's revised Standards for Nursing Education are drawn from national and international best practices for accreditation in healthcare and other professional industries. Each standard has identified measurable quality indicators. The standards form the basis for accrediting, approving, monitoring, maintaining and evaluating the quality of nursing and midwifery educational programmes.

*Registrar  
Singapore Nursing Board  
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## **STANDARD ONE: GOVERNANCE**

The institution that provides education for nurses shall ensure policies and practices reflect professional nursing standards and meet the needs and expectations of the community of interest. Policies and practices are consistent with the Standards for Nursing Education of the SNB.

### ***Quality Indicators***

- 1.1 The institution seeking accreditation of the nursing programmes(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 the professional development of the learners, reflect professional nursing standards and the needs of the community of interest.
- 1.3 The organisation chart delineates authority, responsibility, accountability and communication in the institution and the nursing department or school.
- 1.4 The Head of the Department or School shall be responsible for maintaining organisational standards and regulatory requirements in all aspects of the programme as stipulated by SNB.
- 1.5 Authority for oversight of the programme is delegated to the Head or Assistant Head of the Department or School.
- 1.6 Authority to lead a nursing programme is delegated to a qualified Registered Nurse.
- 1.7 There is evidence that current policies and procedures guide the programme administration, management and evaluation.
- 1.8 Expected faculty outcomes are identified by the Department, School or Institution. They are written and communicated to the faculty.
- 1.9 Nursing faculty are involved in the development, review and revision of programme policies and practices.
- 1.10 The learners' record in the programme is maintained for verification and shall include:
  - (i) academic results; and
  - (ii) credit hours in the classroom, laboratory and clinical practice placement (where applicable).

- 1.11 There is evidence of a policy to guide the process when the institution collaborates with other educational institutions and where there is a transfer of educational credits.
- 1.12 The institution shall submit the detailed curriculum of a new programme for accreditation and approval by SNB at least nine months before the proposed implementation date of the programme.
- 1.13 The institution seeking re-accreditation of the programme shall submit the revised curriculum to SNB nine months prior to the end of the accreditation period.

## **STANDARD TWO: CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**

The curriculum design ensures the 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.

### ***Quality Indicators***

- 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 SNB
  
- 2.2 The Curriculum Development Committee shall include Nurse Educators, nurses in practice, and at least two members who have training and/or experience in curriculum development.
  
- 2.3 The curriculum provides evidence of:
  - (i) a conceptual framework that underpins educational and nursing philosophies;
  - (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;
  - (v) linkages between subject objectives, learning outcomes, assessments and expected competencies; and
  - (vi) 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 contents and clinical learning experiences;
  - (iii) learning outcomes and competencies for the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes;
  - (iv) clinical practice placements (where applicable) to facilitate interaction between learners and clients to achieve the stated learning outcomes; and
  - (v) appropriate methods of assessment to reflect the achievement of expected outcomes specific to the programme.
  
- 2.5 There is evidence of commitment from the healthcare industry to accept learners for clinical practice placements\*.

- 2.6 There is sufficient and relevant clinical experience for learners to achieve the stated learning outcomes.
- 2.7 The clinical placement provides purposeful and 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 contents, learning outcomes, assessments and graduate competencies are mapped against and supports the development and application of SNB’s Code for Nurses and Midwives, Core Competencies and Generic Skills of Registered Nurses, Enrolled Nurses, Registered Midwives and Registered Nurse (Psychiatric):
- (i) Professional, Legal and Ethical Nursing Practice;
  - (ii) Management of Care;
  - (iii) Professional Development; and
  - (iv) Leadership and Nursing Management (where applicable).
- 2.9 There is evidence of representation from the institution and nurses in practice to review/ revise the course/ programme. There is input from current and past students.
- 2.10 The validity of the accreditation per course/programme is three to five years as tabled below:

Course/ Programme Duration	Accreditation Period	Accreditation Period for initial/first accreditation
Less than 2 years	3 years	2 years
2 years and above	5 years	3 years

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

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

*\*For quality indicators relating to clinical practice placements, refer to the ‘Standards for Clinical Nursing Education’*

## **STANDARD THREE:**

### **ASSESSMENT**

The curriculum incorporates a variety of approaches to assessment. The assessment and evaluation of learning is a continuous process of providing feedback on learners' progress and achievement of learning outcomes.

#### ***Quality Indicators***

- 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, attitude and behaviours required for professional nursing practice;
  - (iii) has evidence of formative and summative assessment;
  - (iv) has explicit marking rubric for each assessment component; and
  - (v) has a consistent approach to assessment across modules or subjects that are periodically reviewed and updated.
- 3.2 The institution shall establish an Examination Board or Committee with clearly defined functions for academic programmes.
- 3.3 The institution shall have a grading system based on a modular credit system for academic programmes.
- 3.4 The faculty responsible for assessment shall have formal preparation in assessment and evaluation.
- 3.5 The assessors shall have experience/ expertise in the subject area.
- 3.6 Evaluation outcomes are used for the development, improvement and planning of future learning opportunities for learners.

## **STANDARD FOUR: TEACHING FACULTY**

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

### ***Quality Indicators***

- 4.1 Nursing faculty have academic and/ or professional nursing qualifications in the relevant discipline in advance (at least one level higher) of the programme of study taught (refer to table on pages 11 to 12 that includes work experience of nursing faculty).
- 4.2 Only Registered Nurses with a valid Practising Certificate issued by the SNB can teach nursing and nursing practice related contents in the programme.
- 4.3 All faculty, including full-time and part-time employed staff, shall show evidence of undertaking or completion of a course in curriculum development or design, teaching and learning strategies, assessment and evaluation.
- 4.4 Adjunct/Associate/Sessional Lecturers/Facilitators/Tutors shall show evidence of completion of a preparatory course in teaching, learning and assessment.
- 4.5 Faculty teaching clinical speciality modules and non-nursing subjects shall possess appropriate professional qualifications and experience.
- 4.6 There shall be evidence of continuing professional education for faculty and currency of nursing competencies for faculty involved in clinical supervision/ education\*.
- 4.7 The performance of faculty is evaluated periodically to assure ongoing competence and development.
- 4.8 There shall be a minimum of 60% full-time faculty teaching the programme.

*\*For quality indicators relating to clinical supervision/education refer to the '**Standards for Clinical Nursing Education**'*

## **STANDARD FIVE: RESOURCES**

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

### ***Quality Indicators***

- 5.1 There is evidence of:
- (i) human resources to support the development and implementation of the programme;
  - (ii) physical resources (e.g. classroom, laboratories, tools and materials, equipment, library, instructional technology facilities, audio-visual aids, offices and spaces) that are accessible to faculty and learners to enable the achievement of programme outcomes; and
  - (iii) learning resources such as adequate and current collection of literature on nursing and related subjects, including e-resources.

## **STANDARD SIX:**

### **PROGRAMME EFFECTIVENESS AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT**

The education institution utilises a systematic process to determine programme effectiveness with an emphasis on continually improving the quality of teaching and learning experience for students and the competence of its graduates.

#### ***Quality Indicators***

- 6.1 There is an oversight by an academic board or equivalent, on the school's responsibility and control of the programme development, monitoring, review, evaluation and quality improvement.
- 6.2 There is regular evaluation of academic and clinical supervisor effectiveness through feedback from students and other sources and systems to monitor and improve staff performance.
- 6.3 Feedback obtained from the quality improvement processes is incorporated into the programme to improve both theoretical and practical learning for learners.
- 6.4 There are regular evaluation and revision of programme contents and learning methodologies to incorporate emerging issues surrounding nursing practice, healthcare trends and policy reforms.

## CRITERIA FOR ACCREDITATION OF NURSING PROGRAMMES

Type of Programme	Duration	Curriculum	Educational Setting	Minimum Qualification and Work Experience of Nursing Faculty
Pre-enrolment: Certificate in Nursing	Two years full-time	Refer to SNB's Guidelines for Curriculum Accreditation of Pre-enrolment Nursing Programmes.	Institutes of technical education or equivalent	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Diploma or Degree in Nursing</li> <li>2. Three years of full-time post-registration clinical nursing experience</li> <li>3. Teaching experience and qualification</li> </ol>
Pre-registration: Diploma in Nursing	Three years full-time  Two years full-time (Professional Conversion Programme)	Refer to SNB's Guidelines for Curriculum Accreditation of Pre-registration Nursing Programmes.	Tertiary academic institutions or equivalent	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Degree in Nursing</li> <li>2. Three years of full-time post-registration clinical nursing experience</li> <li>3. Teaching experience and qualification</li> </ol>
Pre-registration: (Undergraduate) Degree in Nursing	Three years full-time  Two years full-time (Professional Conversion Programme)  Four years full-time (Honours)	Refer to SNB's Guidelines for Curriculum Accreditation of Pre-registration Nursing Programmes.	Universities located in Singapore	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Master Degree in Nursing (preferred), or a minimum of Degree in Nursing and Master Degree in a related field</li> <li>2. Three years of full-time post-registration clinical nursing experience</li> <li>3. Teaching experience and qualification</li> </ol>
Post-registration: Advanced Diploma in Nursing	Full or part-time	Refer to SNB's Guidelines for Curriculum Accreditation of Post-registration Advanced Clinical Education Nursing Programmes.	Tertiary academic institutions or equivalent	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Degree in Nursing</li> <li>2. Nursing speciality qualification</li> <li>3. Three years of full-time post-registration clinical nursing experience, and with a minimum of two years full-time clinical nursing experience in the nursing speciality</li> <li>4. Teaching experience and qualification</li> </ol>
Post-registration Specialist Diploma in Nursing	Full-time or part-time	Theory shall be sufficient to meet learning outcomes and competencies. Clinical practice placement at least two weeks	Tertiary academic institutions or equivalent	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Degree in Nursing</li> <li>2. Nursing speciality qualification</li> <li>3. Three years full-time post-registration clinical nursing experience, and with a minimum of two years full-time clinical experience in the nursing speciality</li> <li>4. Teaching experience and qualification</li> </ol>

*Standards for Nursing Education*

<b>Type of Programme</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Curriculum</b>	<b>Educational Setting</b>	<b>Minimum Qualification and Work Experience of Nursing Faculty</b>
Post-registration Graduate Diploma (Nursing Specialty)	Full or part-time	Theory shall be sufficient to meet learning outcomes and competencies of the curriculum. Minimum 50% of curriculum hours allocated for clinical practice placement.	Tertiary academic institutions, minimum university status at a local campus or in collaboration with local registered education provider	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Master Degree in Nursing</li> <li>2. Nursing speciality qualification</li> <li>3. Three years full-time post-registration clinical nursing experience, and with a minimum of two years full-time clinical experience in the nursing speciality</li> <li>4. Teaching experience and qualification</li> </ol>
Post-registration Degree in Nursing	One year full-time  Two years part-time	Refer to SNB's Curriculum Requirements for Bachelor of Nursing (Post-registration).	Tertiary academic institutions, minimum university status at a local campus or in collaboration with local registered education provider	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Master Degree in Nursing (preferred), or a minimum of Degree in Nursing and Master Degree in related field</li> <li>2. Three years of full-time post-registration clinical nursing experience</li> <li>3. Teaching experience and qualification</li> </ol>
Short Nursing Programme	Three to six months	Minimum theory component is allocated at least 100 hours. Minimum clinical laboratory and clinical practice placement components are allocated at least 100 hours.	Healthcare institutions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Diploma in nursing or equivalent</li> <li>2. Nursing speciality qualification</li> <li>3. Three years of full-time post-registration clinical nursing experience, and with a minimum of two years full-time clinical nursing experience in the nursing speciality</li> <li>4. Teaching experience and qualification</li> </ol>

Note: Any variation to the above criteria will be subject to SNB's approval. SNB shall accredit clinical practice placement areas.  
SNB shall accredit short nursing programmes for the purpose of registration and enrolment.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Term	Definition
Assessors	Faculty conducting the assessment.
Accreditation	The process by which a statutory/ accrediting 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/accrediting body.
Assessment	An evaluation method, process and record.
Clinical practice placement	Part of the education process which takes place in any practice setting in hospitals or the community.
Competency	The necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes a nurse/midwife must possess in order to perform a set of defined activities to an expected standard
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 and are engaged in curriculum development and review, marking/ grading of assessments, module(s) and programme evaluation.
Institution	An institution refers to an organisation providing nursing education programmes at the university, polytechnic, institute of technical education or equivalent establishment.
Nursing programme	All nursing programmes ranging from certificate to postgraduate 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 a formal and recognised qualification.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
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 Completion/ Achievement of special skills or competence.
Singapore Nursing Board (SNB)	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, the scope of practice, and professional conduct and ethics of nurses, midwives and Advanced Practice Nurses in Singapore.
Standard	Statement of a defined level of quality, which articulates the expectations of the learning outcomes of the programme.
Teaching experience	Teaching experience includes formal teaching in a classroom setting, in-service teaching, facilitating workshops; clinical supervision and assessment.
The Nurses and Midwives Act (Cap 209) (2012 Revised edition)	A law passed by the Singapore Parliament that establishes the SNB for the purposes of registration and enrolment of nurses, registration of midwives and certification of APN. 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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