

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

Course structure

1. What does it mean if a course is NMBA ‘approved’?

The criteria for NP endorsement require applicants to complete a Master of Nursing. The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia ‘approve some courses as suitable to meet the education criteria for endorsement. Applicants who complete a non-approved pathway of study will need to provide evidence that their study program was equivalent. The Board will process this application via Pathway 2 and will assess whether the applicant’s program of study is suitable to meet the education criteria for endorsement

2. Can the program be completed online?

Yes – the program is conducted in part on campus to provide clinical skill workshops and an opportunity for students to meet and learn from discussion with each other. To make study for regional students possible the on-campus commitments are scheduled in blocks. However, remote attendance is possible to make these sessions more accessible. An academic is available to facilitate the online student group to ensure that their learning experience is supported during these sessions. In addition to the on-campus sessions, there are also online webinars and tutorials for all students..

3. Can I complete the program over 1 year if I study full time?

No – the program is designed to ensure that students have sufficient time to apply theory to practice and develop their clinical competence. Furthermore, the content is sequenced so that students build logically on knowledge and skill as it is acquired e.g. students learn examination skills and diagnostic decision-making before they concentrate medication management.

4. Can I spread it out over 3 or 4 years?

Yes provide the options (pathway maps)

5. Can I enrol mid-year?

Yes – However, if you enrol mid-year you will complete the program over 2.5 years.

6. Can I complete the subjects in a different sequence?

The subjects are scheduled in a specific order to support logical development of knowledge; e.g. assessment before management. Furthermore, some subjects have pre-requisites. However, there are some circumstances where completing the course over 2 years commencing at the beginning of the year does not suit students. For this reason, we have made two other pathways possible. Other potential sequences would need to be approved by the Course Coordinator.

Clinical practice – placement and support

7. Is my role advanced practice?

Advanced practice for the purpose of this course is not defined by a role but by the clinical scope of the role. Advanced nurses demonstrate expertise and clinical leadership, higher level decision-making judgement, incorporate research into their practice and make significant impact on patient and client

outcomes. Advance practice may be visible in nurses employed in nurse consultant roles, clinical nurse specialist roles, case managers etc.

8. Am I eligible if I am employed as a service manager, an educator etc?

Students must be employed in a clinical role and as a result some roles although considered advanced nursing are not eligible. If your position is not by title a clinical role you may be asked to provide evidence that the equivalent of 38 hours/fortnight is clinical and that you would have the capacity to complete IPP in addition to these hours.

9. Am I eligible if I don't work 38 hours for a single employer?

If you are not employed a minimum of 38 hours in one specified clinical field you are not eligible. This ensures that during the course students have ample opportunity to apply theory to practice and that they continue to accrue the necessary advanced practice experience to meet the NMBA endorsement criteria.

If your employment is in one clinical field but across two employers, you will need to discuss your eligibility for the program with the Course Coordinator to identify suitable clinical practice and support and supervision arrangements to make achievement of the course requirements possible.

10. What is integrated professional practice (IPP)?

IPP is supernumerary practice which enables the student to develop and demonstrate the NMBA Nurse Practitioner Standards for Practice in their clinical field. The aim is to integrate new knowledge into practice, engage across disciplines and the focus is on developing advanced and extended clinical capability. The emphasis is on learning rather than service delivery to meet key performance indicators; therefore this time is supernumerary, which means that the student must be practicing outside their employed position. A more comprehensive explanation of supernumerary IPP is provided in an ANMAC explanatory statement, which can be found on their website at the following web address: <https://www.anmac.org.au/document/supernumerary-definition>

11. How many hours of integrated professional practice (IPP) do I need to complete and is this time paid?

All students enrolled in the program must complete 300 hours of IPP over their course. These hours are allocated to the clinical subjects in this program (see Course Information for details). Following enrolment, you will negotiate the scheduling of these hours with the service providing IPP and have this approved by the Course Coordinator. These hours must be supernumerary to meet University requirements for IPP, however it is the decision of the employer as to whether these hours are paid.

12. Where do I complete integrated professional practice (IPP)?

It is expected that the majority of your IPP hours (260hours) will be completed in your clinical service. The remaining 40 hours will be completed in a complementary service within their place of employment and/or at an external agency. For example; a nurse in a tertiary wound care service may complete IPP hours with the vascular service and the remaining hours with a community health care clinic or district nursing service to complement their experience.

13. Can I enrol in this course if I can't complete 300 hours of integrated professional practice (IPP)?

No – the IPP hours are a mandatory for an accredited NP study program and are a component of several subjects across the program. You are encouraged to discuss your options with the Course Coordinator who may be able to assist in the negotiation of suitable IPP experience during the program.

14. What are my alternatives if I can't meet the expectations for the IPP?

You may choose to complete the course-work Course and select subjects which provide very similar theoretical content but do not mandate IPP with the associated clinical assessments. Completion of these subjects may be sufficient to meet the requirements for endorsement via Pathway 2. This would require that the NMBA accept this study plan as equivalent to an approved program. Prospective student in these circumstances are encouraged to review the criteria for endorsement and associated documents on the [NMBA website](#) and discuss their options with the Course Coordinator.

15. What is a Clinical Teaching and Supervision Team and who should be in this team?

A Clinical Teaching and Supervision team is a small group of clinicians (minimum two) that assist the student to achieve the learning outcomes of the program. The team must include a clinician with prescribing rights (doctor or NP) who is nominated as the Team leader and at least one other clinician (ideally from another discipline). Each team must include a nurse leader if the team leader is not an NP. The team will provide clinical education and guidance as the student develops advanced practice capability. Team members will supervise (directly and indirectly) the practice of the student (particularly during IPP) to ensure that they practice safely and effectively while developing competence. The team will also support the student to develop clinical and professional leadership capacity. In addition, CTS team members will complete some clinical assessments of student performance over the duration of the program. The Clinical Information for CTS Team members document provides more detail about the role of the CTS Team.

16. If I have a Clinical Teaching and Supervision Team is it essential to have employer support?

Yes – it is essential that your employer supports your enrolment. Your employer must agree to the allocation of resources to your CTS Team, potential increases in your scope of practice and completion of IPP hours in the organisation before you enrol in this course.

Application

17. I have studied before; can I get credit for any of the subjects in the program?

It depends on what you have completed previously as you will need to be given advanced standing as the content of the program is all mandatory. This means that you must have completed a subject that is substantially similar to one that is included in the program to be granted advanced standing. Here are several examples :

Student A – The student has previously completed a Master of Public Health at another university which included a subject of similar weighting and content to POPH90302 Introducing Health Services Research. This student is given advanced standing for this subject

Student B – The student has previously completed a graduate diploma in a clinical field at another university and completed a subject called Evaluating Healthcare; the objectives are similar but the subject is weighted about half POPH90302. This student will not be granted advanced standing for this subject.

Student C – The student has completed a graduate diploma at an overseas University and completed a subject with similar objectives and weighting to PHARM90002 Pharmacology for Health Professionals. This student is given advanced standing for this subject.

If you are unsure about your eligibility you are encouraged to discuss this with the Course Coordinator. To apply for credit you will need to provide a subject outline that details the objectives, content and assessments of the subject.

18. Can I complete this program if I am an international student?

Yes – if you are currently employed by an Australian Health Service in an advanced practice role a minimum of 38 hours/fortnight and they can guarantee your employment for the duration of the course.

19. What are the fees for this course and how do I pay?

Current fees and scholarship information is available on the [Department of Nursing website](#). This page provides information for domestic and international students.

More information

20. Can I get more information about this program?

Yes – there are a number of ways that you can get more information and they include: Pre-enrolment Course Information, the [Department of Nursing website](#) and the [University Course Handbook](#). If you still have unanswered questions you can email student administration (nursing_enquiries@unimelb.edu.au) and they can forward your email to the appropriate person.