

HPAC Forum Communique

August 2025

The Health Professions Accreditation Collaborative Forum (HPAC Forum) is a coalition of the 15 accreditation authorities providing accreditation functions for the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law.

The Forum works collaboratively with our member organisations and other stakeholders to improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of accreditation and assessment functions of the regulated health professions for the benefit of the community.

Background

The establishment of the new Adelaide University (commencing in 2026) represents a unique opportunity for collaboration across health professional education accreditation authorities and Adelaide University in the interests of efficient accreditation. Health professional education programs previously offered by the University of Adelaide (UoA), and/or the University of South Australia (UniSA), will be offered from Adelaide University and will be complemented by some new programs, which are being developed for delivery in the new university.

Collaborative Accreditation Efforts

A working group, established under the HPAC Forum with representatives of each affected accreditation authority, Adelaide University leadership, and representatives of each Adelaide University discipline group, has been meeting to identify efficiencies and opportunities for collaboration in the accreditation of programs.

Accreditation authorities under the National Scheme are represented by:

- Australian Pharmacy Council
- Australian Medical Council
- Australian Dental Council
- Australian Physiotherapy Council
- Occupational Therapy Council of Australia
- Australian Psychology Accreditation Council
- Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council
- Medical Radiation Practice Accreditation Committee

- Podiatry Accreditation Committee

Program Categories

The working group recognised that programs fell into two broad categories. Firstly, there are programs that are intended to continue unchanged, as accredited in the new university. These programs are known to the accreditation authorities, who have insight into the program and confidence in the design and delivery of the program insofar as the current accreditation status of the program. What is not known, is the structure, leadership, governance and policy environment that the program will be operating within under the auspices of a new university. These programs are to be assessed as a material change assessment (however named) and will focus only on the necessary changes that result from the change of entity. Teaching and learning, assessment and stakeholder relationships (for example) were assumed to be continuing.

Accreditation Authorities undertaking a material change assessment of continuing programs are:

- Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (Master of Nursing (Nurse Practitioner), Master of Midwifery (graduate entry))
- Australian Dental Council
- Australian Medical Council
- Australian Pharmacy Council
- Medical Radiation Practice Accreditation Committee
- Podiatry Accreditation Committee

The other group of programs to be assessed are new programs, or programs where an assessment for accreditation was due to be conducted regardless of the changes related to the establishment of Adelaide University. In some cases, the Adelaide University discipline team elected to develop a new program and transition students from the existing UoA and UniSA programs into the new common program. In other circumstances the scheduled, cyclic review of accreditation provided an opportunity to articulate a new program for the new context.

Accreditation Authorities undertaking full assessments for new or expiring programs are:

- Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (Bachelor of Nursing, Master of Nursing (graduate entry), Bachelor of Midwifery)
- Australian Physiotherapy Council
- Australian Psychology Accreditation Council
- Occupational Therapy Council of Australia

Guiding Principles

The working group have agreed upon, and have been acting on, several principles that underpin the work. The principles are:

- A profession specific lens is essential to ensuring quality outcomes for a profession.
- Common information can be utilised for each accreditation.
- Continuing programs need only communicate the changes related to governance, and other elements related to the establishment of a new university.
- New programs, or programs due for accreditation will require full assessments.

Achievements to Date

- Identification of common expectations with regards to both governance and interprofessional learning, aligned with each accreditation authority's accreditation standards.
- Adelaide University has developed a common submission document to be included for each program accreditation, complemented with profession specific information as required.
- A suite of Adelaide University policies with relevance to the needs of all accreditation authorities has been curated and made available.
- Information sharing from earlier accreditation events, to inform later, planned accreditation activity for other professions.
- Utilising accreditation reports from one accreditation authority as a data point to complement the assessment from other accreditation authorities.
- Collaboration on site visit planning for professions scheduled for similarly timed site visits.

Advocacy and Outcomes

A tangential benefit of the working group has been the ability to provide advocacy for health professional education accreditation with the Adelaide University leadership, to ensure the timely design and implementation of governance, leadership and policy that are essential for health profession accreditation. One outcome has been the acceleration of key leadership appointments that are necessary for program governance and a requirement of the standards of all accreditation authorities.

We hope this information is helpful in keeping you abreast of the way in which we are responding to regulator and provider requests around harmonising processes in accreditation, whilst also retaining the discipline specific rigour that is vital for the safety of the public.

Further information

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