



POLICY REGARDING NURSING EDUCATION

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POLICY REGARDING NURSING EDUCATION

1. NURSING EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

1.1 Nursing education contributes to the general development of human potential in South Africa and is directed specifically towards the provision of competent nurses and midwives. In setting its standards, the South African Nursing Council¹⁾ endeavours to remain within the framework of the national education system. The requirements of other countries are also taken into account in determining the minimum requirements for nursing education programmes.

1.2 Education for registration as a nurse and/or midwife complies with the requirements for professional education; that is, it is planned, structured education over a long period, which is focused on professional service and which generates knowledge.

1.3 Nursing education leading to registration by the Council complies with the requirements for formal post-secondary education in South Africa -

1.3.1 Nursing education with a view to basic registration as a nurse and midwife is provided residentially at a nursing school which has been approved in terms of legislation.

1.3.2 Nursing education for basic registration as a nurse and midwife or for registration of a post-basic additional qualification by the Council complies with the requirements for formal post-secondary education, namely -

* first, it is provided at a university within a department of nursing or at a nursing college within a co-operation agreement with a university; in either case, the institution has been approved as a nursing school by the Council in terms of the Nursing Act, 1978 (Act 50 of 1978)²⁾ ;

* second, it is provided with a view to the acquisition of a degree or diploma instituted in terms of legislation;

* third, admission to the degree or diploma studies complies with the requirements for admission to post-secondary education.

1) Hereafter referred to as "the Council"

2) Hereafter referred to as "the Act"

1.3.3 Nursing education leading to basic registration as a general nurse, psychiatric nurse, community nurse or midwife and post-basic education for registration of an additional qualification, which takes place at a nursing school other than those named under 1.3.2, complies with the requirements for formal post-secondary education, namely -

* first, it is provided by a nursing school which has been approved by the Council in terms of the Act;

* second, it is provided with a view to the acquisition of a diploma instituted in terms of the Act.

1.4 Nursing education for enrolment by the Council as a nurse or nursing auxiliary complies with the requirements for formal post-school education, namely -

* first, it is provided by a nursing college or other institution approved as a nursing school by the Council in terms of the Act;

* second, it is provided with a view to the acquisition of a certificate instituted in terms of the Act.

1.5 The establishment and monitoring of policy for nursing education is effected by the prescribing of nursing education policy and standards by the Council, taking national post-secondary education and national nursing practice requirements into account.

The Council believes that the implementation of nursing education policy at national level should be directed and co-ordinated with the assistance of an advisory council established in terms of legislation.

1.6 Nursing education for basic registration or enrolment is planned with a view to educational advancement and professional growth.

1.7 Nursing education focuses and centres on Nursing Science as an academic discipline, developed and taught by nurses.

2. THE PURPOSE OF NURSING EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

The purpose of nursing education in South Africa is -

2.1 The provision of the nurses and midwives who are necessary for the delivery of comprehensive health care in South Africa -

2.1.1 Registered Nurses and Midwives

- * who constitute the professional cadre in nursing and function as knowledgeable, competent and ethically motivated independent practitioners on an equal footing with other professional health workers;
- * who prescribe, provide and evaluate a nursing or midwifery regimen based on the needs of the patient, and who take the lead when functioning in a nursing team;
- * who can progress academically to the highest level in the subject discipline and who are able to function as researchers and consultants.

2.1.2 Enrolled Nurses or Nursing Auxiliaries

- * who complement the registered nurses and midwives and function under their supervision in the nursing team.

2.2 The provision of high level clinical, management and educational nursing manpower by means of formal continuing education programmes to enhance standards of nursing education and nursing practice.

3. THE PHILOSOPHY UNDERLYING NURSING EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

The Council believes that the health needs of the population of South Africa demand a comprehensive health care approach and believes, therefore, that all programmes of nursing education should be directed towards the provision of nursing education who are able to deliver effective, comprehensive nursing based on the health needs of the community, at primary, secondary and tertiary health care levels.

The Council believes further that nursing requires an objective, systematic, goal-directed and ethical approach, and that the socio-cultural needs of the community must be served through nursing education programmes.

3.1 Objects of the South African Nursing Council

In terms of section 3 of the Act the objects of the Council are -

- * To assist in the promotion of the health standards of the inhabitants of South Africa;
- * To set standards for and to control the education and the practice of nurses, midwives and nursing auxiliaries;
- * To advise the Minister of National Health on any matter falling within the scope of the Nursing Act;
- * To communicate to the Minister of National Health information of public importance acquired by the Council.

3.2 Definition of nursing

The Council regards nursing as a caring profession which supports and assists the patient, ill or well, at all stages of life, to achieve and maintain his potential for health optimally. Where this is not possible, the patient is cared for so that he lives in dignity until death. Accompaniment is fundamental to all nursing.

Nursing is practised by persons who are registered or enrolled in terms of section 16 of the Act and whose practice is prescribed by

- * regulations published in terms of section 45(1) (regulations relating to the scope of practice of persons who are registered or enrolled under the Nursing Act, 1978 and regulations relating to the conditions under which persons who are registered or enrolled under the Nursing Act, 1978 (Act 50 of 1978) may carry on their profession), and
- * rules published in terms of section 35 (rules setting out the acts or omissions in respect of which the council may take disciplinary steps).

3.3 Definition of Nursing Science

The Council describes the academic discipline Nursing Science as a clinical health and human science that constitutes the body of knowledge for the practice of persons registered or enrolled under the Nursing Act as nurses, midwives or nursing auxiliaries.

Within the parameters of nursing philosophy and ethics, it is concerned with the development of knowledge for

- * diagnosing of the health status,
- * treatment and
- * personalised health care

of those exposed to, suffering or recovering from physical/spiritual/mental ill health. It encompasses the study of preventive, promotive, curative and rehabilitative health for the nursing of individuals, families, groups and communities and covers man's life-span from before birth.

Nursing science consists of the following sub-disciplines

- * history, philosophy and ethos
- * fundamental nursing science
- * general nursing science
- * psychiatric nursing science
- * community nursing science
- * midwifery
- * nursing education, and
- * nursing administration/management.

3.4 The responsibility for nursing education

The Council has determined that the registered nurse is responsible for the development, content, co-ordination, teaching and control of nursing education.

It is regarded as essential that members of other disciplines should be involved in the training of nurses.

3.5 The purpose of nursing education programmes

The Council believes that nursing education programmes should be specifically directed at the development of the nursing student as an adult on personal and professional levels. The learning process must be completed in respect of the cognitive, affective and psychomotor development of the student in order to achieve the prescribed programme objectives.

The development of the ability for analytical, critically-evaluative and creative thinking and the continuing stimulation of the capacity to interpret scientific data for nursing actions, to draw conclusions and to exercise independent judgement, are of the utmost importance.

4. SETTING AND MONITORING OF STANDARDS FOR NURSING EDUCATION

In terms of section 3 of the Act, the Council controls all matters concerning nursing education and training, while section 4 makes provision for the approval and monitoring of nursing schools, the conduct of examinations and the issuing of diplomas and certificates.

Section 45(1)(i) of the Act provides for the making of training regulations. These regulations apply to the standards set for the training leading to registration as nurse or midwife, for registration of additional qualifications, and for enrolment as a nurse or nursing auxiliary. In each case, the regulations are supplemented by a manual containing the minimum requirements for education and a guide for the teaching in a specified programme.

4.1 Regulation of nursing education programmes

The Council provides regulations and manuals or guidelines for the following programmes:

- 4.1.1 Basic education for registration -
Nurse and Midwife.
- 4.1.2 Basic education for enrolment -
Nurse;
Nursing Auxiliary.
- 4.1.3 Supplementary basic education for persons who
are registered or enrolled -
General Nurse;
Psychiatric Nurse;
Community Nurse;
Midwife.
- 4.1.4 Post-basic education for registration of
additional qualifications -

Non-clinical -
. Nursing Education;
. Nursing Administration;

Clinical -

- . Medical and Surgical Nursing Science (various speciality directions);
- . Psychiatric Nursing Science (various speciality directions);
- . Midwifery and Neonatal Nursing Science (various speciality directions);
- . Community Nursing Science (various speciality directions);
- . Child Nursing Science (various speciality directions);
- . Occupational Health Nursing Science;
- . Gerontological Nursing Science;
- . Clinical Nursing Science, Health Assessment Treatment and Care.

4.1.5 Post-basic short courses for listing (guidelines only).

4.2 Accreditation of nursing schools and educational programmes

The implications of sections 15 and 16 of the Act are that any school offering education programmes for nurses/midwives for registration or enrolment by the Council, must comply with the standards set by the Council for such registration or enrolment. For this purpose, the Council accredits nursing schools and educational programmes in nursing.

The Council views accreditation as the outcome of a process whereby the Council grants recognition to a nursing school and its educational programme/s in accordance with the relevant regulations. (See also section 4 (e) of the Act).

4.2.1 The Council exercises authority in respect of all matters affecting the education of nurses in South Africa by specifying the standards for such education.

4.2.2 A nursing school and those of its educational programmes which meet these standards are accredited by the Council.

Each programme is submitted and accredited individually.

4.2.3

Through accreditation the Council confers upon a nursing school the legal right -

- * to offer educational programmes leading to registration or enrolment with the Council;
- * in the case of nursing colleges, except in programmes leading to enrolment, to conduct examinations in association with a university or on behalf of the Council. The latter right is also applicable to technikons.

4.2.4

The accredited nursing school has the responsibility to -

- * apply for re-accreditation every six years;
- * demonstrate the ability to meet and maintain the standards required in accordance with the relevant regulations for accreditation;
- * ensure that the student/pupil demonstrates progress in personal and professional growth which will culminate in the achievement of the programme objectives;
- * ensure that all teaching staff involved in the presentation of an accredited programme are suitably qualified and competent. This concept applies to both theory and practice components;
- * ensure that the appropriate facilities and learning opportunities are available to meet the required standards for the programme;
- * certify that a student/pupil has met the requirements of the approved programme;
- * display all valid accreditation certificates.

4.2.5 The Council requires an accredited nursing school to be involved in ongoing development of facilities and learning opportunities to enhance the standards of nursing education.

4.2.6 The Council has the authority to withdraw accreditation of a nursing school or programme if the requirements are not complied with.

4.3 Monitoring of nursing education

4.3.1 Mechanisms and premises

The Council has the following mechanisms for the monitoring of nursing schools and educational programmes, namely

- * the professional development section which is staffed by nursing subject specialists and
- * in loco monitoring/accreditation visits (inspections).

For the purpose of monitoring, an educational programme is a programme of education and training which has been approved in terms of section 15 (3) of the Act, which leads to the acquisition of a qualification which confers on the holder thereof the right to registration as a nurse or midwife or enrolment as a nurse or nursing auxiliary, or to registration of an additional qualification in terms of section 22 of the Act.

According to the definition in the Act, a nursing school is "any institution where persons are educated and trained for the profession of nursing or midwifery." Nursing school is a comprehensive concept which includes all relevant facilities and resources for personal and professional development of students and pupils in order to reach the programme objectives.

4.3.2 Considerations in monitoring

The emphasis in monitoring is on the determination and enhancement of the quality of education. The following are considerations in this regard

4.3.2.1 The educational programme

- * the person in charge of the educational programme
- * accounting for the educational programme and the implementation thereof
- * evaluation of the educational programme presented for information, and which includes the following -

- . curriculum, including:
 - programme and course objectives,
 - summary of the content of each subject,
 - duration and weight of each subject in the programme,
 - clinical learning objectives,
 - clinical learning opportunities and period of exposure in each relevant clinical area,
 - evaluation: formative and summative (examples of instruments);
- . distribution of theoretical and clinical learning opportunities over the whole programme (programme flow chart);
- . class and tutor timetables;
- . description of examination regulations and system.

4.3.2.2 Student admission and support

- * admission requirements
- * verification of admission qualifications
- * student support system

4.3.2.3 Facilities and resources: Suitability and utilization of -

- * teaching staff
 - . availability
 - . relevance of clinical and academic qualifications and experience
 - . continuing development
 - . involvement of non-nursing experts in the teaching
- * physical facilities and equipment
- * library and teaching aids
- * clinical facilities
 - . availability, accessibility (for students and tutors) and quality
 - . practice accompaniment: the nature and role players
 - . co-operation between teaching and clinical staff
 - . laboratory/simulation facilities.

4.4 Certification

In terms of section 4 of the Act the Council has the authority to conduct examinations, issue qualifications and to recognise the qualifications of other institutions.

In terms of section 16 of the Act, persons with recognised qualifications are registered or enrolled by the Council.

In the case of additional qualifications, the qualification can be registered against the name of the person in terms of section 22 of the Act.

4.4.1 Conducting examinations and issuing of qualifications

- * Where an institution does not have the legal authority to conduct examinations or to issue qualifications
 - . the Council is the examining body and issues the qualifications
 - . the nursing school may conduct the examinations on behalf of the Council with the necessary authorization. In such cases the Council approves the examiners and moderators and issues the qualification.
- * In the case of education for enrolment as a nurse or nursing auxiliary, the Council is always the examining body and issues the qualifications. No institution is permitted to conduct these examinations on behalf of the Council.
- * In all cases where the Council is the examining body, examiners and moderators are appointed by the Council on grounds of their expertise and experience. An examination system based on the principles of confidentiality and safety is maintained and is operated by the examinations department of the Council. The appointment of examination invigilators and the establishment of examination centres country-wide are part of this system. All institutions which conduct examinations on behalf of the Council must comply with the Council requirements regarding safety and confidentiality.

4.4.2 Recognition of qualifications

The Council may recognise a qualification of another institution provided it is equivalent, whether partially or completely, to a qualification prescribed by the Council. Recognition takes the form of registration or enrolment and the issuing of a registration or enrolment certificate.

4.4.2.1

South African qualifications

- * The Council recognises qualifications for registration from a post-secondary educational institution -
 - . which has been accredited by the Council as a nursing school
 - . the relevant educational programme of which has been accredited by the Council
 - . which has the legal authority to offer education and issue qualifications.
- * For purposes of registration, the Council recognises subject credits from previous approved education together with additional single subjects, which in combination, are equivalent to a recognised qualification of the Council, and which are submitted by an accredited nursing school which is legally authorised to issue qualifications.
- * The Council recognises qualifications of post-basic short courses, the educational programmes of which have been approved by the Council for listing.

4.4.2.2

Foreign qualifications

- * Foreign qualifications with a view to registration or enrolment are handled according to specific policy. The following are taken into account in considering an application -
 - . school qualification
 - . the status of the nursing qualification in the educational system of the country concerned
 - . the programme of nursing education
 - . language proficiency

- * In addition to the abovenamed considerations, every provisionally approved candidate takes the requisite professional practice examination at registration or enrolment level.

- * Persons whose applications cannot be approved without additional requirements being met are handled on merit according to established guidelines. In the case of candidates for registration, legal provision exists in terms of section 21, for limited registration under specified conditions.