



**HEALTH EDUCATION
SERVICES AUSTRALIA**

Guidelines for the accreditation of immunisation education programs using the Standards for the Accreditation of Immunisation Education Programs 2020

Background

The National Immunisation Strategy 2019-2024 identifies immunisation as a cost-effective national public health priority in Australia. The Strategy also recognises the diverse range of health professionals that play an important role in providing accurate and comprehensive information about vaccines and immunisation programs.

The National Framework for Immunisation Education for Health Professionals (the Framework) has been established to assist in the development of nationally consistent immunisation education programs. The Framework sets an agreed curriculum benchmark for all immunisation education programs to meet in order to be considered a nationally recognised program, and to support transferability of qualifications across states and territories. Through a nationally agreed set of core standards, the Framework aims to ensure the provision of high-quality immunisation education programs for health professionals who are not medical practitioners but are seeking authorisation to possess and administer vaccines without a medical order.

The Framework specifies program learning objectives and outcomes that set minimum curriculum content requirements that must be used as a resource for the education of eligible health professionals at undergraduate or post-graduate levels.

Nationally agreed program accreditation standards have also been developed that require education providers to submit information about their immunisation program's governance, design and delivery, assessment, student processes, resourcing and quality and risk management. Accreditation is based on assessment of the immunisation program against these standards. If accreditation is granted, this leads to posting as a nationally approved program of study on the Health Education Services Australia's website and, potentially, to mutual recognition of immunisation education programs across all states and territories.

NB: Pharmacist immunisation training requirements are currently specified in state and territory legislation. These reference the Australian Pharmacy Council's (APC) 'Standards for the accreditation of programs to support pharmacist administration of vaccines' as the basis by which appropriateness or equivalence of pharmacist delivered immunisation education can be determined. The APC vaccination training standards have been recently revised to align to the National Framework. As such APC accredited providers may continue to deliver pharmacist and pharmacy student immunisation training subject to state and territory legislation.

Governance

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council was requested by the Commonwealth Department of Health through the Chief Nurse and Midwifery Officer as the Chair of the Australian Health Protection Principle Committee working group for the Implementation of the National Immunisation Education Framework for Health Professionals; to act as the single point of entry for immunisation education provider courses seeking to be accredited against the National Immunisation Education Framework for Health Professionals (the Framework). The ANMAC Board determined that a separate entity, Health Education Services Australia (HESA), would be established to separate ANMAC's role in providing the accreditation functions under the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (2009)* from services provided to other entities.

HESA will undertake the accreditation of immunisation education programs as requested by education providers that are seeking to be accredited against the Framework.

Please note that each State and Territory may require additional competencies to be met prior to authorisation of health care professionals to independently vaccinate, subject to each state and territory's legislation.

HESA has been authorised to deliver the following functions:

- Develop and review of minimum education provider standards, the [Standards for the Accreditation of Immunisation Education Programs 2020](#)
- Accredite immunisation education programs that may lead to authorisation of health care professionals to independently vaccinate, subject to each state and territory's legislation. HESA Accreditation is valid for 3 years.
- Establish and maintain a central national register of accredited immunisation education programs, accessible via the [HESA website](#)
- Monitor accredited education programs, as the means by which program changes can be reported and assessed as continuing to meet HESA's Standards for the Accreditation of Immunisation Education Programs 2020.

HESA will assign an assessment panel for each program to be accredited. The panel will consist of the following members:

- One Associate Director as chairperson
- One health professional with current qualification and skills in education
- Authorised Immuniser of relevant professional group
- Health professional with current knowledge and experience in immunisation

Accreditation framework

This section outlines the Immunisation Accreditation Framework for Immunisation Program Education Providers, including assessment processes and responsibilities.

Accreditation assessment

1. The education provider provides an 'intention to submit' notification to HESA
2. HESA assigns an assessment panel and schedules timelines
3. HESA sends an application pack to the education provider together with an invoice for the accreditation fee
4. The education provider sends the application to HESA and makes payment
5. HESA receives the application
6. Payment is confirmed by the HESA Finance Officer
7. Program assessment commences - the application is assessed against the Standards for the Accreditation of Immunisation Education Program, which includes mapping of program content and assessment against the learning domains and learning outcomes of National Immunisation Education Framework for Health Professionals
8. The education provider is provided further opportunities by the assessment team to submit additional information to support their application for program accreditation
9. The 'Outcome of Accreditation Assessment Report' is prepared by the assessment panel
10. The 'Outcome of Accreditation Assessment Report' is sent to the education provider
11. The assessment panel submits the report that incorporates an accreditation recommendation to the Managing Director of HESA.
12. The Managing Director reviews the report and makes an accreditation recommendation that is included in the finalised Outcome of Accreditation Assessment Report that is provided to the Board to approve the accreditation decision
13. The education provider is informed of the outcome of accreditation
14. Information about the education provider's approved immunisation program is added to the approved immunisation programs list on the HESA website.

Accreditation decision

The outcomes of the accreditation process will be:

- accreditation is granted
- accreditation is not granted.

Accreditation is granted

Accreditation is granted when HESA is satisfied the immunisation education program to be conducted by the education provider meets the approved standards. Accreditation is usually granted for a period of three years.

Accreditation may also encompass targeted monitoring that is in addition to the Program Monitoring Report required annually.

Accreditation is not granted

If the education provider does not submit a program that meets the requirements as set out in Standards for the Accreditation of Immunisation Education Programs 2020. HESA must provide written notification to the education provider. The written notice must state:

- the reason for the decision
- within 30 days after receiving the notice, the education provider can apply to HESA for an internal review of the decision (Cost to be determined)
- how the education provider can apply to have the decision appealed.

Appeal of accreditation decision

The education provider must submit the request for an appeal of the 'Not for Accreditation' decision within 30 days of notification. Appeal requests must be in writing and addressed to the Managing Director, HESA. The education provider must include details of why HESA should reconsider its decision.

The Managing Director will designate a review committee and this will not include anyone who originally assessed the program.

The committee will:

- review the original report and recommendations
- discuss proposed program with the education provider to resolve issues
- takes other reasonable steps that are required.

Once the review is completed the committee finalises the report and provides it to the Managing Director who provides the outcome to the authoriser and to the education provider.

The results of the review are final.

Continuity of accreditation

Education providers are to regard every application as a new one, even if it draws on past curricula, evaluations and previously submitted information.

Accreditation of a program is generally granted for a period of three years. Education providers are to submit their application for accreditation at least 6 months prior to expiry of their current registration. HESA will send a reminder to the education provider 6 months prior to expiration of accreditation.

If there is an issue identified with program delivery of an approved immunisation program, accreditation may be revoked following an investigation by HESA.

HESA works with education providers to ensure continued compliance with accreditation standards does not stifle innovation or continuous quality improvement of the immunisation program. While program changes are supported and encouraged it is important that an education provider reports program changes to Health Education Services Australia.

Routine monitoring

An annual Program Monitoring Report completed by the education provider, is designed to confirm a program continues to be delivered as accredited, against the relevant accreditation standards.

As a general condition of accreditation, HESA requires education providers to routinely submit a Program Monitoring Report on the annual anniversary of the program's accreditation. HESA sends the report template to the education provider 6 weeks before the anniversary. Submitting the completed report by the due date is a condition of accreditation. If an education provider fails to submit the report on time, HESA reserves the right to undertake a monitoring visit to the education provider to determine if the approved accreditation standards are being met. The education providers will be invoiced for all costs incurred.

Targeted monitoring

Additional reporting requirements are an essential part of HESA's ongoing monitoring since they ensure approved immunisation programs continue to meet the Standards for the Accreditation of Immunisation education Programs.

The reporting requirements required at the time of the accreditation decision are included in the finalised Outcome of Accreditation Assessment Report, which is sent to the education provider along with the accreditation decision. HESA reviews the reporting requirements when provided by the education provider. If reporting requirements change during a program's accreditation cycle, the education provider will be formally notified (in writing) by HESA.

HESA can also place additional reporting requirements on an accredited program if:

- complaints have been made against the education provider and/or program this would normally be processed at a local level / or with the provider
- Program Monitoring Report has not been adequately completed
- Program Monitoring Report has not been submitted on time.

Enrolment of students

Education providers must ensure students who are applying to undertake an approved program of study are aware of current state and territory legislation relating to the authorisation of immunisers.

Students who are seeking a pathway to mutual recognition are required to complete an approved program, students should not be enrolled until a program has been approved and appears on the Approved Program of Study List on the HESA website. Completion of a HESA approved program of study *may* lead to mutual recognition across all states and territories.

Education providers must ensure advertising material used to inform potential students contains accurate information on the accreditation status of both the education provider and the program being advertised.

Students who are applying to undertake an approved program of study are to be made aware of all program requirements.

Complaints management

HESA values complaints in relation to program delivery recognising effective complaints management fosters an environment of safety, continuous quality improvement and

promotes accountability and transparency.

HESA works cooperatively with all stakeholders to manage and resolve complaints in an impartial and confidential way. HESA recognises those administering a program are often best placed to decide how to resolve a grievance. However, compliance with accreditation standards remains a key focus of HESA's strategy for managing complaints.

Quality cycle

This section outlines HESA's quality cycle which includes the regular review of all aspects of its standards, policies and procedures relating to accreditation. This includes the review of the:

- Policies, processes and procedures that relate to HESA in managing the accreditation of immunisation education programs
- Accreditation standards.

Review of policies and processes

A formal review of HESA's policies and processes, including those relating to accreditation, takes place every three to five years. This review is undertaken through formal planning and with relevant staff. Information is gathered through research and stakeholder consultation. Collated information is provided to HESA for discussion and action.

Review of accreditation standards

A formal review of HESA's approved accreditation standards for immunisation education programs in Australia takes place generally every five years.