

Accreditation in the National  
Registration and Accreditation  
Scheme (NRAS):  
**A snapshot 2018/19**



**Ahpra  
& National  
Boards**

# Introduction

**The National Registration and Accreditation Scheme** (the Scheme) was established by the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (the National Law) in July 2010.

The Scheme is multi-professional, regulating over 740,000 health practitioners in 16 professions. The accreditation functions in the National Law include developing accreditation standards, accrediting programs of study against approved accreditation standards and assessing overseas-qualified practitioners.

**Accreditation** is integral to the Scheme as it is the key way to ensure that individuals seeking registration have the knowledge, skills and professional attributes to safely and competently practise their profession in Australia.

**Snapshot of Accreditation** is a yearly summary of whole of scheme information about accreditation activities. This version is current at 30 June 2019.

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## Contact us

Please contact AHPRA on **1300 419 495** or visit our website **[www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au)**.

This document was prepared by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency in collaboration with National Boards and the Health Professions Accreditation Collaborative Forum



HEALTH  
PROFESSIONS  
ACCREDITATION  
COLLABORATIVE  
FORUM

Australia's accreditation authorities  
for regulated health professionals



Ahpra  
& National  
Boards

# Accreditation

## What is it?

### Program Accreditation

Program accreditation is the process of assessing whether an educational program of study and the education provider that provides the program produce graduates who have the knowledge, skills and professional attributes to safely and competently practise the profession in Australia.

### Practitioner Assessment

Practitioner assessment is the process of assessing whether an overseas-qualified practitioner has demonstrated the knowledge, clinical skills, and professional attributes to safely and competently practice the profession in Australia.

There are four accreditation committees and eleven accreditation councils exercising accreditation functions in the National Scheme (see: [www.ahpra.gov.au/Education/Accreditation-Authorities](http://www.ahpra.gov.au/Education/Accreditation-Authorities))

## Accreditation Committees:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Accreditation Committee
- Chinese Medicine Accreditation Committee
- Medical Radiation Practice Accreditation Committee
- Paramedicine Accreditation Committee (from April 2019)

## Accreditation Councils:

- Council on Chiropractic Education Australasia
- Australian Dental Council
- Australian Medical Council
- Australian Nursing & Midwifery Accreditation Council
- Occupational Therapy Council of Australia
- Optometry Council of Australia and New Zealand
- Australian Osteopathic Accreditation Council
- Australian Pharmacy Council
- Australian Physiotherapy Council
- Australian Psychology Accreditation Council
- Australian and New Zealand Podiatry Accreditation Council

## Accreditation in the National Scheme: Who does what?



## Other bodies involved in accreditation



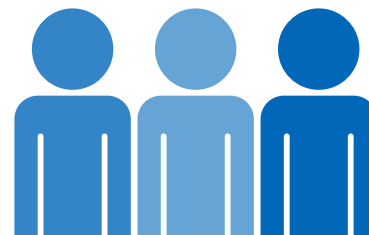
### Accreditation Liaison Group

The National Boards, Accreditation Authorities and AHPRA have established an Accreditation Liaison Group (ALG) to facilitate effective delivery of accreditation within the National Scheme. The ALG is a committee of the Forum of NRAS Chairs and, as an advisory group, it provides an important mechanism to consider shared issues in accreditation across National Boards, Accreditation Authorities and AHPRA. The ALG has developed a number of reference documents to promote consistency and good practice in accreditation while taking into account the variation across entities. These documents have been approved by National Boards and Accreditation Authorities. Examples include the *Quality framework for the accreditation function*.



### The Health Professions' Accreditation Collaborative Forum

The Health Professions' Accreditation Collaborative Forum (HPACF), formerly known as the Health Professions' Accreditation Councils' Forum, is the coalition of the entities appointed by the National Boards as Accreditation Authorities for the professions regulated under the National Law. The HPACF has been meeting regularly since 2007, before the commencement of the Scheme, to consider matters of common interest, principally matters concerning the accreditation of education and training programs in the regulated health professions and advocating for good accreditation practices. The HPACF engages with AHPRA and the National Boards. The HPACF publishes a communiqué after each meeting.

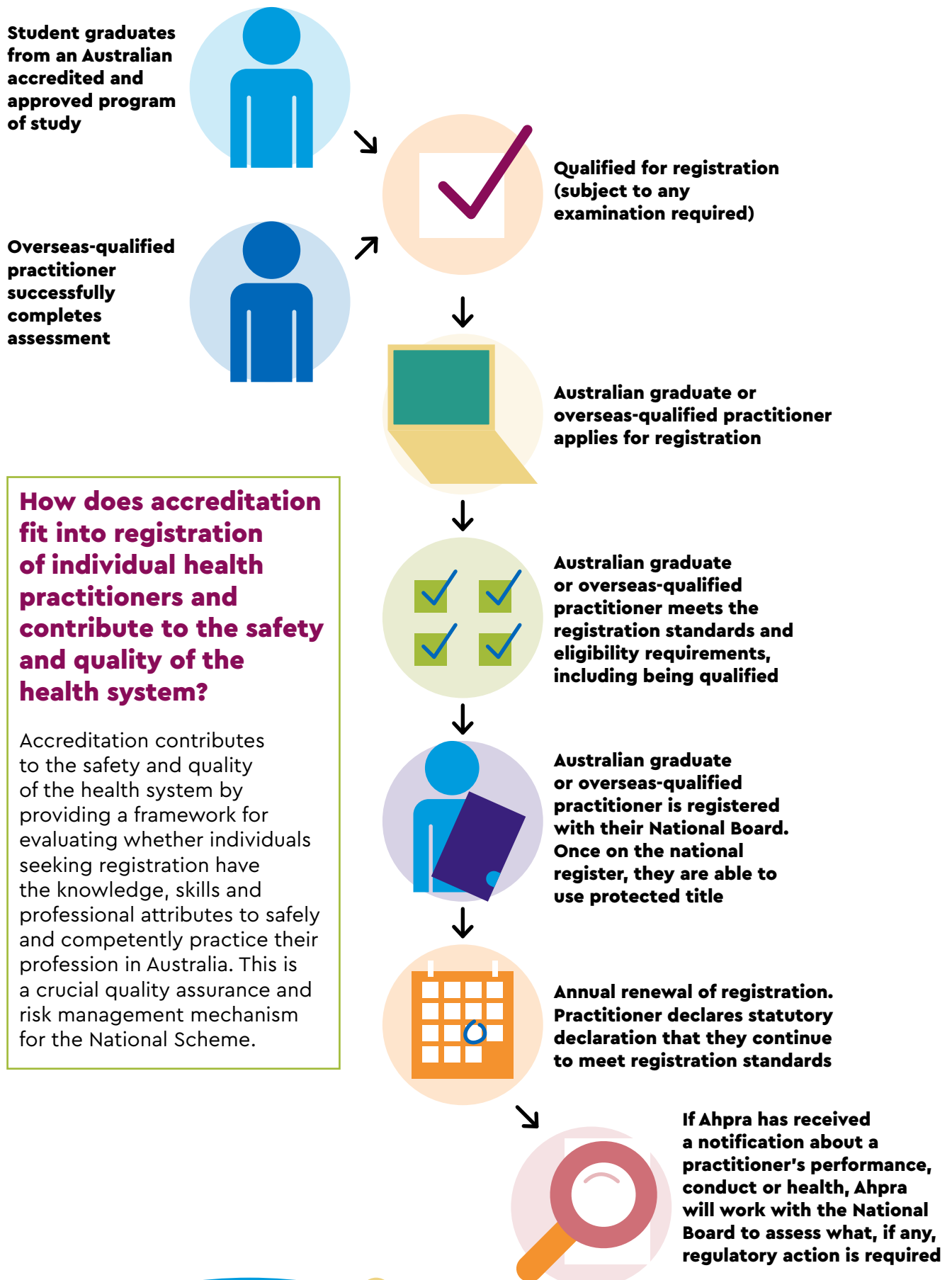


### Ahpra's Accreditation Advisory Committee

Ahpra's Accreditation Advisory Committee (AAC) is a standing committee of the Agency Management Committee. The AAC has been meeting regularly since April 2018 to provide oversight and leadership on accreditation governance, accountability and transparency issues and a scheme-wide perspective on Ahpra's management of contracts for the performance of the accreditation functions. The AAC was established in response to issues and themes identified by the Accreditation Systems Review Draft Report and aligns with the Agency Management Committee's current functions and powers. The AAC publishes a communiqué after each meeting.

# Accreditation functions and registration of health practitioners

## Lifecycle of a health practitioner



### How does accreditation fit into registration of individual health practitioners and contribute to the safety and quality of the health system?

Accreditation contributes to the safety and quality of the health system by providing a framework for evaluating whether individuals seeking registration have the knowledge, skills and professional attributes to safely and competently practice their profession in Australia. This is a crucial quality assurance and risk management mechanism for the National Scheme.

# Accreditation activities 2018/19

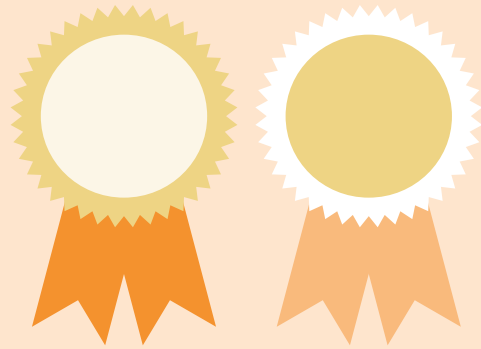
## Program accreditation activities

**56 new programs accredited**

**103 programs re-accredited**

**581 programs monitored**

**117 site visits undertaken**



## Practitioner assessment activities

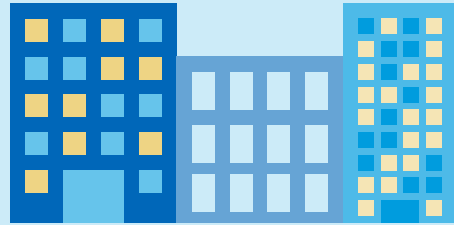
**10,187 overseas-qualified health practitioners assessed**



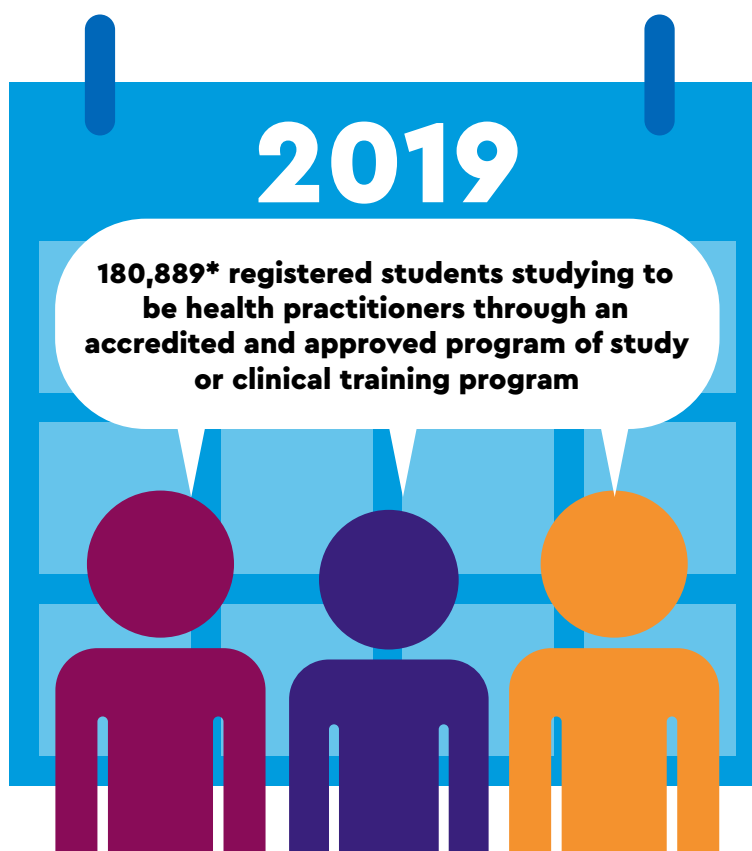
## Overall program accreditation at 2019

**1,000+ accredited programs**

**130+ providers offering accredited programs**



# What's new in accreditation



## Accreditation standards

**4 new standards published in 2018/19**

**5 standards currently under review**

## Accreditation Systems Review final report

In 2015, after considering recommendations from the final report of the *Independent Review of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme for health professionals* (NRAS Review), Health Ministers asked the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council (AHMAC) to commission an independent review of accreditation systems.

The Accreditation Systems Review final report was released in October 2018 by the COAG Health Council, the final report makes recommendations to reform the accreditation system for regulated health professions in Australia. Ahpra, National Boards and Accreditation Authorities provided responses to the consultation in early 2019. For more information about the review see [www.coaghealthcouncil.gov.au/Projects/Accreditation-Systems-Review](http://www.coaghealthcouncil.gov.au/Projects/Accreditation-Systems-Review).

## Accreditation standards: What are they?

Accreditation standards are used to assess whether a program of study, and the education provider that provides the program of study, provides graduates of the program with the knowledge, skills and professional attributes to practise the profession

## New agreements and terms of reference

Following a scheduled review of accreditation arrangements, in mid-2018, all National Boards except paramedicine made decisions on assignment of accreditation functions for their profession for the period 1 July 2019 – 30 June 2024. In November 2018, the Paramedicine Board of Australia made a decision to assign accreditation functions for the period 1 December 2018 – 30 November 2021. The new agreements and terms of reference will take effect on 1 July 2019. Ten external accreditation councils signed new agreements until 30 June 2024

## Links to new standards

[Accreditation Standards for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practice](#)  
(effective 1 June 2020)

[Accreditation Standards for Medical Radiation Practice](#)  
(effective 1 March 2020)

[Accreditation Standards for Australian entry-level Occupational Therapy education programs](#)  
(effective 1 January 2020)

[Accreditation Standards for Psychology Programs](#)  
(effective 1 January 2019)

\*students in pre-registration programs

## Overseas qualified practitioner assessments



**9 Accreditation Authorities assess overseas-qualified practitioners seeking registration in a registered health profession in Australia**

**Council on Chiropractic Education Australasia**

**Australian Dental Council**

**Australian Medical Council**

**Occupational Therapy Council of Australia Ltd**

**Optometry Council of Australia and New Zealand**

**Australian Osteopathic Accreditation Council**

**Australian Pharmacy Council**

**Australian Physiotherapy Council**

**Australian and New Zealand Podiatry Accreditation Council**

Overseas-qualified practitioners seeking registration in other registered health professions in Australia are assessed when they apply for registration



# Further details about work in accreditation

Each Accreditation Authority, the HPACF and Ahpra publishes information on their websites:

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Accreditation Committee

<https://www.atsihealthpracticeboard.gov.au/Accreditation/ATSIHP-Accreditation-Committee.aspx>

## Chinese Medicine Accreditation Committee

<https://www.chinesemedicineboard.gov.au/Accreditation/Committee.aspx>

## Council on Chiropractic Education Australasia

<http://www.ccea.com.au/>

## Australian Dental Council

<http://www.adc.org.au/>

## Australian Medical Council

<http://www.amc.org.au/>

## Medical Radiation Practice Accreditation Committee

<https://www.medicalradiationpracticeboard.gov.au/Accreditation/Accreditation-Committee.aspx>

## Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council

<http://www.anmac.org.au/>

## Occupational Therapy Council of Australia Ltd

<http://otcouncil.com.au/>

## Optometry Council of Australia and New Zealand

<http://www.ocanz.org/>

## Australian Osteopathic Accreditation Council

<http://www.anzoc.org.au/>

## Paramedicine Accreditation Committee

<https://www.paramedicineboard.gov.au/Accreditation/Accreditation-Committee.aspx>

## Australian Pharmacy Council

<http://pharmacycouncil.org.au/>

## Australian Physiotherapy Council

<http://www.physiocouncil.com.au/>

## Podiatry Accreditation Committee

<https://www.podiatryboard.gov.au/Accreditation/Accreditation-Committee.aspx>

## Australian Psychology Accreditation Council

<http://www.psychologycouncil.org.au/>

## Health Professions Accreditation Collaborative Forum

<http://www.hpacf.org.au/>

## Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

<https://www.ahpra.gov.au/Publications/Accreditation-publications.aspx>