

Information for Nurses & Midwives Educated & Trained Overseas in non-EU Countries



and applicants within EU Member States who do not qualify under EU directives

Regarding Eligibility to Register with



An Bord Altranais
IRISH NURSING BOARD

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Section 1

APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION AS A NURSE

Introduction

The Nurses Act, 1985, together with the European Union (EU) Directives ensures a fair and transparent processing of applications from candidates holding EU nursing and midwifery qualifications. The assessment of applications for candidates holding non-EU qualifications requires a comprehensive evaluation to ensure the suitability of the applicant to have their name entered in a division of the register maintained by An Bord Altranais. An Bord Altranais maintains separate divisions of the register for:

Registered General Nurse (RGN)

Registered Midwife (RM)

Registered Mental Handicap Nurse (RMHN)

Registered Nurse Tutor (RNT)

Registered Psychiatric Nurse (RPN)

Registered Public Health Nurse (RPHN)

Registered Sick Children's Nurse (RSCN)

An Bord Altranais mindful of its regulatory authority to promote high standards of professional education and training and professional conduct among nurses and its mission to protect the public through these functions, presents the following information for nurse and midwife applicants to Ireland. Please read carefully the information provided in this booklet. You may then wish to proceed with an application for registration.

Detailed information on the application procedures to be followed and documentation requirements is provided on the application form.

Application for a single Division of the Register

The register maintained by An Bord Altranais is divided into divisions that indicate different specialities within the nursing profession. In order to apply for registration in a certain division it is necessary to have been educated and trained in that division. For example if you were educated and trained as a General Nurse alone and yet have gained considerable experience working as a Sick Children's Nurse you will not be eligible to register on the division of the register pertaining to Sick Children's Nursing unless you can demonstrate educational preparation.

Applications for two or more Divisions of the Register

Applicants wishing to have their name entered on two or more divisions of the register are required to have met the education and training requirements set out below and to have completed a post-registration course that meets the Requirements for Nurse Registration Education Programmes—Post-Registration as set out in the *Requirements and Standards for Nurse Registration Education Programmes (An Bord Altranais, 2000)*. The post-basic programme must have a balance of theoretical and clinical instruction commensurate with the requirements of An Bord Altranais (2000).

If a second registration is dependent on a primary registration the applicant must apply for primary registration at the same time as applying for the secondary registration. An applicant may wish to apply to register on a division of the register (e.g. the psychiatric division) but received education and training leading to registration in that speciality secondary to a primary qualification (e.g. a general nursing qualification). In this case the applicant is required to apply for registration in the division in which the primary registration was obtained (i.e. the general division) as well as the division in which he/she obtained secondary registration (i.e. the psychiatric division).

Evaluation of an Application

When An Bord Altranais has received all required documents, duly verified, an officer in the Education Department of An Bord Altranais undertakes an evaluation of the application for registration.

Each application is evaluated on an individual basis.

The evaluation of the application for registration is undertaken to:

- (a) assess that the applicant is established as a first-level¹ nurse in the country of origin and that he or she is of good standing in that country and in any other country where the applicant may have been registered
- (b) determine the adequacy of the education and training course when compared to an equivalent course in Ireland
- (c) examine proof of English language competency in cases where English is not the first language or primary language of expression of the applicant

Education and Training Requirements

In order to be considered for registration, applicants must be registered as first level nurses in the country where the nursing education programme was completed. In order to determine the adequacy of the education and training course when compared to an equivalent course in Ireland all applications for registration as a nurse are compared individually to the Requirements and Standards for Nurses in Ireland as set out in the *Requirements and Standards for Nurse Registration Education Programmes (An Bord Altranais, 2000)* document. In order to be registered as a nurse, applicants must comply with the following minimum education and training requirements as set out in the document:

- the programme of education and training must have been not less than three years in length or 4,600 hours.
- and
- the programme must have demonstrated a balance of theoretical and practical instruction of not less than one-third theoretical instruction and not less than one-half clinical/practical instruction.

General Nursing Applications

In the case of general nursing applications, the programme must have included theoretical and clinical instruction and experience in: general and specialist medicine; general and specialist surgery; accident and emergency; child care and paediatrics; maternity care (obstetrics); mental health and psychiatry; care of the older person; and home/community nursing and operating theatre.

Psychiatric Nursing Applications

In the case of psychiatric nursing applications, the programme must have included theoretical and clinical instruction and experience in psychiatric nursing (including in-patient and community care settings); specialist care, care of the older person and adult general nursing.

Mental Handicap Nursing Applications

In the case of mental handicap nursing applications, the programme must have included theoretical and clinical instruction and experience in mental handicap nursing to include: education and development of the child and adult; disorders of human behaviour; acute nursing; specialist areas; and management.

Post-registration Experience and Post-registration Courses

Credit may be given for relevant post-registration experience associated with post-registration courses when detailed information on such is provided with an application.

¹First-level nurse relates to a fully qualified Registered Nurse as opposed to an Enrolled, Associate, Assistant, or Practical nurse.

English Language Competence

English is the primary language of operation in Ireland. English language competence is required at a level that supports communication and enables the applicant to practice nursing safely and effectively in Ireland. Therefore proof of English language competence in cases where English is not the first language or primary language of expression of the applicant is required. The applicant is required to provide evidence of competence through achievement of an overall band score of 6.5 on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) Academic Test. This score may be achieved from a combination score of the four modules, reading, writing, speaking and listening. To achieve an overall score of 6.5 the applicant must achieve a score of no less than 6.0 in both writing and speaking module and achieve a score of no less than 5.5 in both reading and listening module.

As part of the application for registration process the applicant will be required to arrange to have a Test Report Form issued by IELTS submitted directly to An Bord Altranais by the test centre where the applicant undertook the test. Test Report Forms that have been forwarded by the test centre directly to An Bord Altranais only are accepted. The test must have been undertaken no more than 2 years prior to the date of application or the applicant must provide evidence of having worked as a full time nurse in an English-speaking environment since having completed the test. This will be assessed on an individual basis. Further information on the test may be obtained from <http://www.ielts.org>. Currently there are two test centres in Ireland.

University College Dublin, Applied Language Centre, Belfield, Dublin 4.

University College Cork, Language Centre, Cork City.

Theoretical Shortfall

Information on the routes to registration is outlined in detail on the application form for registration with An Bord Altranais. If, on evaluation of an application, a theoretical shortfall is found in the education and training programme that led to registration as a nurse and subsequent educational experiences, the applicant may be required to undertake an educational component with a competent educational authority to address the shortfall. Successful completion of the educational component with a competent educational authority is required before reapplying for registration. An aptitude test to determine eligibility for registration with An Bord Altranais, is currently being developed. In the future it may be offered to candidates as an alternative to requiring candidates to undertake educational components to address theoretical shortfalls.

Adaptation and Assessment

Following evaluation of an application for registration an applicant may be required to undertake a period of adaptation. A period of adaptation is a period of supervised practice possibly being accompanied by further education and training. An applicant undergoing a period of adaptation will have his/her name entered on a Candidate Register maintained by An Bord Altranais. A nurse undergoing a period of adaptation is referred to as a Candidate Nurse.

The period of adaptation is under the responsibility of a qualified nurse and this period of supervised practice shall be the subject of assessment. The assessment shall represent achievement of An Bord Altranais 'Competencies for Entry to the Register'. The Director of Nursing will attest to the suitability of the Candidate Nurse to have his/her name entered on the register as maintained by An Bord Altranais following this period of adaptation and assessment.

Competencies for Entry to the Register

An Bord Altranais developed a framework of five domains of Competencies for Entry to the Register of Nurses in November 2000. Candidates requiring adaptation will be measured against the five domains of competence as identified in the *Requirements and Standards for Nurse Registration Education Programmes (An Bord Altranais, 2000)* document. These domains represent a broad enabling framework that facilitates the assessment of the Candidate Nurse's clinical practice during the period of adaptation.

Timeframe of Adaptation Period

It is suggested that the minimum time for completing the adaptation and assessment tool is 6 weeks with an acknowledgement that most Candidate Nurses could require up to 12 weeks to achieve the identified competencies. The Director of Nursing of a hospital or an institution approved for the education and training of nurses who agrees to accept Candidate Nurses for adaptation has a responsibility regarding an orientation programme and providing supervision for the Candidate Nurse during the adaptation and assessment period. The Director of Nursing is at liberty to extend the period of adaptation and assessment to a maximum of 12 weeks in order to facilitate the achievement of the competencies as identified in the action plan associated with the Competence Assessment Tool. Periods of further extension are notified to An Bord Altranais.

Recommendation for Registration

A Director of Nursing of an institution approved for the education and training of nurses shall furnish to An Bord Altranais a report on each Candidate Nurse for registration who has completed a period of adaptation in that institution and any clinical site attached thereto. The report shall state whether, in the opinion of the Director of Nursing, the Candidate Nurse has, or has not, demonstrated competence to practice in the discipline of nursing in which registration is being sought and shall recommend or not recommend registration accordingly.

Registration

Once An Bord Altranais has received a report on a given Candidate Nurse from a Director of Nursing in which the Director recommends registration, staff at An Bord Altranais will proceed with the registration procedure. The Candidate Nurse will have his/her name entered on the appropriate division of the register. The Registered Nurse will be notified by An Bord Altranais within a period of two weeks and will be given a personal identification number (PIN). A certificate will be sent to the nurse that can be used as evidence of registration with An Bord Altranais.

Appeals Process

An applicant to An Bord Altranais may appeal the outcome of an evaluation of his/her application for registration. A Candidate Nurse may appeal the outcome of a period of adaptation and assessment. Detailed information on the appeals process is available on the application form.

Accessing Clinical Placement

In order to undertake a period of adaptation and assessment it is necessary to arrange a clinical placement in a teaching hospital or an institution approved for the education and training of nurses. The National Coordinator for Clinical Placements at the Health Service Employers Agency arranges such clinical placements on behalf of employers who have recruited nurses and midwives from overseas. Applicants without an employer may seek to independently arrange clinical placement in a teaching hospital or an institution approved for the education and training of nurses. Detailed information on the process of arranging clinical placements is available at <http://www.hsea.ie> in an information leaflet titled *Thinking about Nursing in Ireland*.



Section 2

APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION AS A MIDWIFE

Evaluation of an Application for Registration as a Midwife

When An Bord Altranais has received all required documents, duly verified, an evaluation of the application for registration as a midwife is undertaken by an officer in the Education Department of An Bord Altranais.

Each application is evaluated on an individual basis.

The evaluation of the application for registration is undertaken to:

1. assess that the applicant is established as a midwife in the country of origin and that he or she is of good standing in that country and in any other country where the applicant may have been registered
2. Determine the adequacy of the education and training course when compared to an equivalent course in Ireland or the educational requirements for midwifery education programmes as set out in the EU Directives.
3. Examine proof of English language competency in cases where English is not the first language or primary language of expression of the applicant. The criteria for determination of English language competence are the same as that for registration as a nurse.

Education and Training Requirements – Midwifery

In order to be considered for registration as a midwife, applicants must have completed one of the following:

- (a) A midwifery education programme of at least three years or 4,600 hours duration. The programme must have a minimum of one-third theoretical content and one-half clinical content.

or

- (b) A midwifery education programme of at least two years or 3,600 hours duration. This programme must have been completed following registration as a Registered General Nurse. Registration as a Registered General Nurse with An Bord Altranais is a prerequisite to registration as a midwife utilising this criteria.

or

- (c) A midwifery education programme of at least 18 months or 3,000 hours duration. This programme must have been completed following registration as a Registered General Nurse. It must be followed by a minimum of one year's clinical practice as a midwife involved in all areas of midwifery practice. Registration as a Registered General Nurse with An Bord Altranais is a prerequisite to registration as a midwife utilising this criteria.

In evaluating the application, the theoretical and clinical content of the programme undertaken is compared to the equivalent programme in Ireland as detailed in the *Requirements and Standards for Midwife Registration Education Programme, 2nd Edition (An Bord Altranais, February 2000)*. Credit may be given for relevant post-registration experience associated with post-registration courses.

Adaptation and Assessment

Following evaluation of an application for registration an applicant may be required to undertake a period of adaptation. A period of adaptation is a period of supervised practice possibly being accompanied by further education and training. An applicant undergoing a period of adaptation will have his/her name entered on a Candidate Register maintained by An Bord Altranais. A midwife undergoing a period of adaptation is referred to using the term Candidate Midwife.

The period of adaptation is under the responsibility of a registered midwife and this period of supervised practice shall be the subject of assessment. The assessment shall be carried out and documented utilising the Performance Assessment for Midwives form developed by An Bord Altranais. When the Competencies for Entry to the Midwives Division of the Register are developed, these will form the basis for assessment.

The timeframe of the adaptation and assessment period is as set out in relation to an application for registration as a nurse.

The Director of Midwifery shall make the recommendation for registration as set out in relation to applications for registration as a nurse.

Applicants may be required to undertake an educational component in order to address a shortfall in the education and training programme that led to registration as a midwife in a similar manner to applications for registration as a nurse.



An Bord Altranais

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