



NURSING AND MIDWIFERY BOARD OF IRELAND

EDUCATION, TRAINING AND STANDARDS

COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Approved by the Board 24 January 2024

1. ROLE AND MANDATE

- 1.1.** The role of the Education, Training and Standards Committee is to perform certain of the Board's delegated functions regarding education, training, standards and ethics as set out in these terms of reference (see Section 8), and to make recommendations to the Board, where required.
- 1.2.** The Committee will assist the Board so that the Board is effective and able to operate in the best interests of the public and the members of the professions of nursing and midwifery; and in doing so the Committee will work and liaise with other Board committees, as appropriate.
- 1.3.** The committee will provide advice to the Board on leading innovations and research in nursing and midwifery education, policy and standards.

2. MEMBERSHIP

- 2.1.** The Committee shall consist of no more than 11 members, appointed by the Board.
- 2.2.** At least six members of the Committee shall be Board members. The majority of members shall, at all times, be members of the Board.
- 2.3.** The Board may appoint suitably qualified external members (i.e. non-Board members) to the Committee, subject to para. 2.2 above.
- 2.4.** New members who are not Board members will be appointed for a three year term (or part thereof), which may be renewed for a further and final three years by the Board.¹ No new member shall serve longer than two terms (i.e. six years) continuously on the Committee.

¹ A member appointed to the Committee whilst a member of the Board will cease to be a member of the Committee on the expiry of his/her term on the Board – i.e. Committee membership cannot outlast Board membership.



2.5. The term of office of Board members on committees shall coincide with their term of office on the Board.

3. CHAIR

3.1. The Chair of the Committee must be a member of the Board and is appointed by the Board from amongst its members.

3.2. The term of office of the Chair appointed by the Board shall be three years (or part thereof), which may be extended to five years by the Board. ²No newly appointed Chair shall serve longer than five consecutive years as Chair of the Committee. The existing Chair - at the point of the approval of these terms of reference by the Board – may exceed this five year limit, but shall not serve longer than his/her term of office on the Board as Chair.

4. SECRETARY

4.1. The Secretary to the Committee shall be a member of staff of the Education Division, and shall be appointed by the Director of Education, Policy and Standards, following consultation with the Director of Education, Policy and Standards, the Committee Chair and the President.

5. MEETINGS

5.1. The Committee shall hold as many meetings as it deems necessary to fully and properly execute its functions, but shall, in any event, meet no fewer than four times per annum.

5.2. The Chair will consult with the Director of Education, Policy and Standards and Secretary in determining the dates and frequency of Committee meetings. Where possible, a schedule of meeting dates shall be agreed by the Committee in advance of the start of each calendar year.

5.3. Only members of the Committee shall be entitled to attend Committee meetings. They will typically be joined by the Director of Education, Policy and Standards and the Secretary to the Committee. At the discretion of the Chair, other individuals may be invited to attend all or part of a meeting when appropriate and necessary – including members of NMBI staff and external advisers.

5.4. The Chair has the discretion to hold part of a Committee meeting in private session, whereby only Committee members have the right to attend. The Chair may determine that the Secretary attends for the purpose of minuting proceedings of the private session.

5.5. The Chair shall seek declarations of conflicts of interest at the start of every meeting and the Secretary shall record these in the minutes.

² Subject to his/her term of office on the Board not having expired before that time.



- 5.6.** Meetings of the Committee will be conducted with all members physically or virtually present – either by video or teleconference – or a combination of both, this to be decided in advance of each meeting by the Chair. Members participating virtually are considered to be present at the meeting and shall be counted in the quorum.
- 5.7.** The Committee may act in the absence of members if a quorum is achieved. If members cannot attend all or part of a meeting, they should notify the Secretary to the Committee in advance of the meeting.
- 5.8.** The quorum for meetings is 39% of Committee members, including at least two Board members, and meetings shall start on time when a quorum is present. Should a quorum not be present within 15 minutes of the scheduled start time, the Chair may postpone the meeting.
- 5.9.** Members must use their best endeavours to attend all Committee meetings each year. All members must attend a minimum of 50% of meetings in a rolling twelve month period, and that save for exceptional circumstances, a member who fails to meet this minimum attendance requirement may be removed from the Committee by the Board. The Secretary will support the Committee Chair and President in monitoring member attendance.
- 5.10.** Meetings are chaired by the Chair. If the Chair is not in attendance or is prevented from acting as Chair by virtue of a conflict of interest, the members present shall nominate another member to act as Chair – subject to the requirement that the member is also a member of the Board.
- 5.11.** Decisions will typically be reached by consensus. In the event that a vote is required or sought, each member present shall have one vote. If there is an equal division of votes, the Chair shall have a second and casting vote.
- 5.12.** It may be necessary for the Committee to take urgent decisions between Committee meetings. With the agreement of the Chair, this may be done by either a) convening an extraordinary meeting of the Committee or b) using the written decision procedure as approved by the Board. In either case, a quorum must be reached. A report on the urgent matter and the decision reached must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting or, in the case of a written decision, presented in a report at the next meeting of the Committee.

6. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

- 6.1.** The Secretary shall minute the proceedings of all Committee meetings reflecting information presented, decisions taken and action items, or the conclusions reached by the Committee. The minutes shall include the names of those present, apologies (where received) and details of any conflicts of interest.
- 6.2.** Draft minutes are prepared by the Secretary and submitted to the Chair for review as soon as is practicable. The Chair will review and revert with any comments and suggested changes. Thereafter, the Secretary will circulate the revised draft to the members for review.



Members should review and revert with any comments within five working days of receipt. Any material changes by members will require the approval of the Chair. The draft minutes, as reviewed by the Chair and members, shall be circulated with the papers for the next meeting of the Committee, where they shall be formally adopted – subject to any suggested changes at that point – and signed by the Chair. Approved minutes can be signed using either a “wet signature” or electronically. If an electronic signature is used, the prior agreement of the chair must be obtained. A straightforward e-signature can be used i.e. a simple scanned copy of the signature, and “Signed electronically” noted on the signing line.

6.3. The Secretary shall be responsible for securely storing the minutes of all meetings.

7. AGENDA AND MEETING PAPERS

7.1. An agenda of the business proposed for the meeting shall be circulated with the papers for the meeting. The Chair, in consultation with the Secretary (and the Director of Education, Policy and Standards and Director of Education, Policy and Standards), shall determine the items for the agenda.

7.2. Notice of each meeting confirming the venue, time and date, together with an agenda of items to be discussed, shall be forwarded to each member of the Committee, any other person required to attend, no later than five working days before the date of the meeting. Late papers will not be accepted, unless in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chair. Supporting papers shall be sent to Committee members and to other attendees as appropriate, at the same time.

8. COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS

Education and Training

To advise and make recommendations to the Board of NMBI on nursing and midwifery education standards and their implementation, ensuring adherence to the legislation set out in the Nursing and Midwifery Act 2011, as amended, associated Nurses and Midwives (Education and Training) Rules 2018 and 2020, and related European Directive 2013 / 55 Recognition of Professional Qualifications.

8.1. Entry to nursing and midwifery professions

8.1.1. To review and monitor criteria for admission to education and training programmes for compliance with the Rules and standards and requirements for the following programmes:

- For Programmes leading to first-time registration
- Post-registration programmes leading to registration



or annotation

- Specialist nursing and midwifery programmes
- Return-to-practice programmes

8.1.2. To monitor that careers information on education entry routes into to nursing and midwifery professions is published by NMBI, and to ensure that such information is accurate and readily available for to the public.

8.2. Education standards and requirements

8.2.1. To ensure that, when NMBI set the education standards for registration in any division, annotation and specialist nursing and midwifery qualifications, that they are evidence based and compliant with minimum standards in Irish and EU legislation.

8.2.2. To review guidelines on curriculum issues and content to be included in programmes, being cognisant of national and international advancements in theory and practice and national healthcare policies and practices informing programme reviews.

8.2.3. To provide feedback and comments to the Board on proposed changes to standards and requirements for the following programmes:

- Programmes leading to first-time registration
- Post-registration programmes leading to registration or annotation
- Specialist nursing and midwifery programmes for first-time registration
- Post-registration leading to registration or annotation
- Specialist nursing and midwifery

8.2.4. To ensure that processes for the development of, or changes to, standards and requirement proposals, follow procedures as specified in the Education and Training Rules.

8.3. Education body programme approval and monitoring

8.3.1. To confirm the accuracy of programme applications and to ensure that they comply with the relevant standards and requirements, and that acceptable governance arrangements are in place.

8.3.2. To make recommendations to the Board in respect of the any decision to approve, apply conditions, defer, or withdraw approval of a programme, providing the rationale for the recommendation.

8.3.3. After initial approval, to monitor ongoing reviews of programmes at least every five (5) years for to ensure continued conformance with the standards and requirements and conditions imposed. To make recommendations to the Board in respect of any decision to continue to approve, apply conditions, defer, or withdraw approval of a programme, providing the rationale for the recommendation.



- 8.3.4.** To review education body annual reports submitted to provide updates in respect of the compliance of programmes with standards and requirements, any conditions imposed, or material changes to the programmes.

8.4. Inspections of education bodies and healthcare providers

- 8.4.1.** To ensure that the correct process is being adhered to for the appointment of a team of people with relevant knowledge and experience to inspect education bodies and associated healthcare facilities in order to assess, review and monitor programmes.
- 8.4.2.** To review a site inspection reports and make recommendations to the Board in respect of any the decision to continue to approve, apply conditions, defer, or withdraw approval of programmes, providing the rationale for the recommendations.
- 8.4.3.** To review recommendations to management of education bodies and allied healthcare providers in respect of improvements in nursing and midwifery education and training standards delivery, or any other issue arising from inspections.
- 8.4.4.** To ensure that inspection reports are published in a timely manner.

8.5. Ethical standards and guidance

- 8.5.1.** To provide feedback and comments on ethical standards and behaviours guidelines appropriate for nurses, midwives, and candidates on the register, including a periodic review of the Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for nurses and midwives.
- 8.5.2.** To provide feedback and comments to the Board to draw to the attention of the Minister for Health and the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, on in respect of matters pertaining to the education and training issues for of nurses and midwives for the attention of the Minister for Health and the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science.
- 8.5.3.** To provide feedback and comments in respect of guidelines on ethical considerations for non-exchequer funding offered for nursing and midwifery education.

8.6. Strategic objectives

- 8.6.1.** To review the Education, Policy and Standards annual business plan to ensure it remains aligned with the NMBI strategic goals.
- 8.6.2.** To provide oversight on an ongoing basis for of the development, implementation and management of schemes approved by the Board on pertaining to the maintaining



maintenance of professional competence on an ongoing basis using a professional competence scheme.

9. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND CODES OF CONDUCT

- 9.1.** Members of the Committee will be required to meet their obligations under the Code of Conduct for Board and Committee Members, the Nurses and Midwives Act 2011, as amended, and the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2016, as appropriate. This includes declaring any real or potential conflict of interest in a matter before the Committee, and safeguarding confidential information received whilst a member of the Committee.
- 9.2.** At the commencement of each meeting, members will declare any real or potential conflict of interest in any agenda item. A written declaration regarding the conflict shall be submitted to the Secretary for safekeeping. The member will withdraw from the meeting while the item is considered and will not vote or act on the matter.
- 9.3.** Members of the committee are required not to disclose any information received by them while performing their duties, even after their duties have ceased. Members are reminded that the disclosure of confidential information (which may be either particular information or information of a particular class or description) is an offence under the Nurses and Midwives Act 2011, as amended.

10. REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

- 10.1.** The Chair shall report, either verbally or in writing, to the Board on the Committee's recent meeting(s) and key outcomes. A report in writing will be on an agreed Committee update template and should reflect the key points in the minutes of the Committee's meeting(s). The agreed minutes of all Committee meetings shall be made available to the members of the Board.
- 10.2.** The Committee shall make whatever recommendations to the Board it deems appropriate on any area within its remit and/or where required.
- 10.3.** The Committee shall produce a report to be included in the Board's annual report about its activities.

11. GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 11.1.** The Committee shall have access to sufficient resources to carry out its duties, including access to the employees of NMBI for assistance as required, and access to independent professional advice where the Board agrees that such advice is necessary for the Committee to discharge its responsibilities.
- 11.2.** The Committee may have access to independent legal or professional advice where



the committee agrees that such advice is necessary for the committee to discharge its responsibilities. Any such advice can only be sought in line with the procedures approved by the Board in May 2020.

11.3. The Committee shall ensure that all members undertake an appropriate induction programme to ensure that they are fully informed about the strategic and key issues affecting the Board and the regulation of the professions of nursing and midwifery. The Committee shall ensure that new members shall receive guidance as to their duties and responsibilities as a Committee member.

11.4. The Committee should review its own performance annually at the last meeting of the Committee in the calendar year. This review should be led by the Director and Chair of the Committee. Any recommended changes following this review should initially be considered by the Board at its end-of-year meeting. Any actions/recommendations agreed by the Board, should be brought should be placed on the agenda at the first meeting of the following year with specified timelines for completion. Any recommendations for changes to the committee's functions/terms of reference arising from the Committee's review of its own effectiveness must be approved by the Board.

12. AUTHORITY

12.1. The Board authorises the Committee to carry out the functions set out in these terms of reference, to have unrestricted access to the NMBI documents and information. Any request for legal advice or other professional advice by the Committee shall be channelled through the Office of the Chief Executive and shall be approved by the Board.

12.2. The Board authorises the Committee to seek any information it requires relating to its functions from any employee of NMBI and all such employees will be directed to co-operate with any request made by the Committee.

Approved by the Board at its meeting on 24 January 2024