



NATIONAL NURSE CREDENTIALLING  
FRAMEWORK

TOOLKIT

FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION  
OF NURSE CREDENTIALLING  
PROCESSES

Developed by Ashley Ryan and Associates on behalf of the Coalition  
of National Nursing Organisations

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## Background

### **The development of the Coalition of National Nursing Organisations (CoNNO) National Nurse Credentialling Framework**

The Coalition of National Nursing Organisations (CoNNO) is an alliance of more than 50 national nursing organisations that work collectively to improve health care by advancing the nursing profession (CoNNO 2010a).

The project to develop a National Nurse Credentialling Framework is a response to requests from member organisations to investigate the development of a nationally consistent approach to nurse credentialling. In 2010 funding was received from the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) to develop a nationally consistent framework for nurse credentialling, including agreed standards, and a resource toolkit to support professional nursing bodies wishing to undertake credentialling (CoNNO 2010b).

A tender process was conducted to appoint consultants to undertake the work, and the CoNNO Council formed the Steering Committee to oversee the management of the Project. Ashley Ryan and Associates (the consultants) were engaged to complete the project work. The Framework and Toolkit were developed between December 2010 and June 2011.

The project involved extensive consultation with CoNNO member and other selected stakeholders, including electronic circulation of materials, templates for feedback from stakeholders, and a workshop.

### **Using the CoNNO National Nurse Credentialling Framework Resource Toolkit**

This Toolkit is a component of the project to develop a National Nurse Credentialling Framework (the Framework) and has been developed as a resource for organisations to use with the Framework to develop their own credentialling processes or review existing credentialling processes. A series of templates and resources including guidelines and checklists have been developed which may assist organisations. Resources may be badged with the logo of the individual organisation as required.

The components of the project which are referred to throughout the Resource Toolkit are:

1. A [Literature Review](#) consisting of national and international policies and literature on nurse credentialling;
2. The [National Nurse Credentialling Framework](#), including:
  - a. Revised definition of credentialling
  - b. Glossary of Terms
  - c. Revised National Credentialling Principles
  - d. The National Credentialling Standards and Criteria

### 3. The Resource Toolkit (this document).

The Literature Review provides a comprehensive background on the history and issues surrounding nurse credentialling in Australia and elsewhere, including arguments in favour of credentialling and its potential benefits, and refers to comparable processes in other health disciplines.

The Framework presents the principles underpinning credentialling and the standards and criteria to guide the development of, or review existing, credentialling processes.

The Resource Toolkit (this document), includes a 'model' credentialling process which refers to a range of templates and checklists and resources to assist implementing the Framework.

## **Introduction to the CoNNO National Nurse Credentialling Framework**

### **Organisation of the Framework**

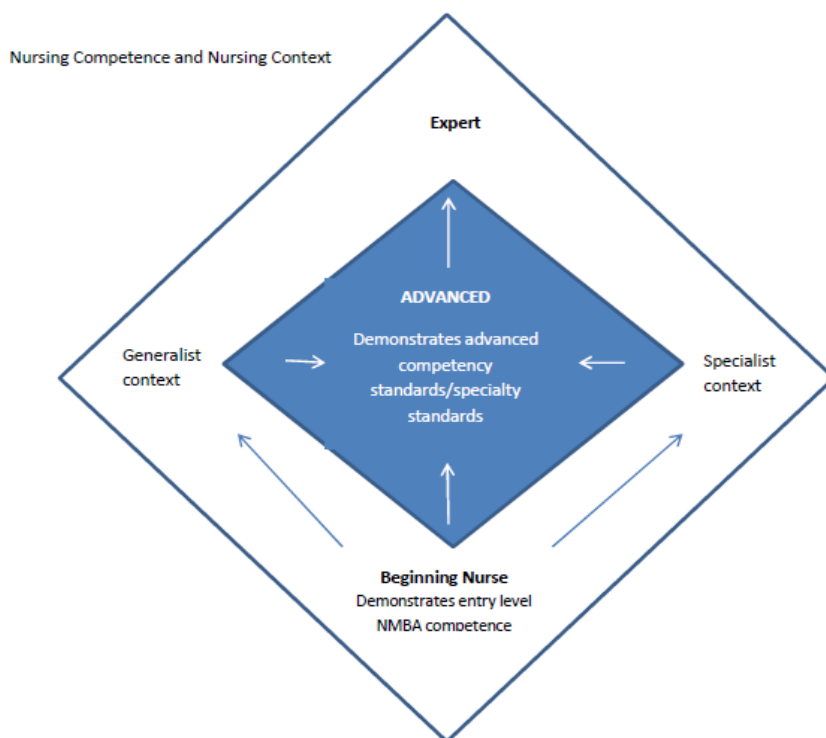
The Framework consists of:

- Glossary of Terms (including the revised definition of credentialling)
- 13 Principles (based on a revision of the NNO 2004 Principles for Nurse Credentialling)
- 10 Credentialling Standards with criteria, which are grouped under sub-headings of:
  - Governance and Review
  - Operational management
  - Information management
  - Management of re-credentialling and cross-specialty credentialling

### **Credentialling and Specialist Practice**

A broad assumption underpinning the National Nurse Credentialling Framework is that specialist practice may or may not include advanced practice (see Figure 1) and is focused on a broad range of knowledge and activities, rather than the performance of a specific task. Figure 1 diagrammatically represents the idea that 'specialist practice may occur at any point on a continuum from beginning to advanced' (NNO 2004, p. iii).

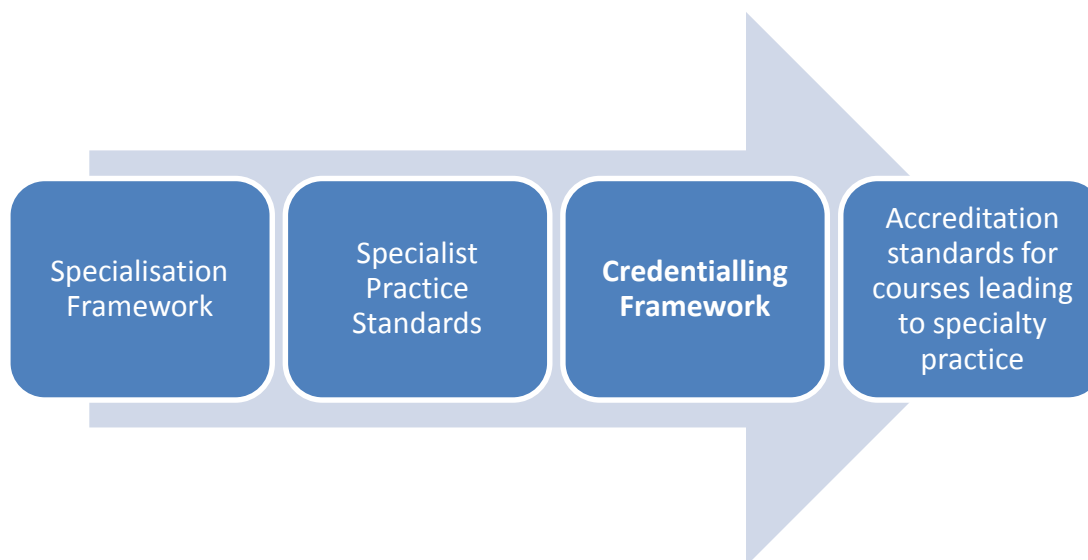
**Figure 1 Adapted from the NNO Glossary of Terms (2004)**



The National Nurse Credentialling Framework is only one means by which the aim of accomplishing the ‘orderly development’ (ICN 1992) of specialist practice is furthered. With this in mind, it is helpful to conceptualise credentialling as one among a continuum of aims : determining what is considered specialist nursing practice; providing benchmarks for specialty practice in the form of professional standards; determining how it is recognised (that is, the process of credentialling); and benchmarks for education processes leading to specialty practice.

Figure 2 below represents this idea. The intention is to show that developing a Credentialling Framework is distinct from developing a model for recognising specialty areas of practice. In Australia, the National Nursing Organisations (NNOs) have agreed 10 criteria for specialty nursing [Glossary of Terms](#) (NNO, 2004) and in 2006, the National Nursing and Nursing Education Taskforce (N3ET) developed a [National Specialisation Framework for Nursing and Midwifery](#) which provides criteria for recognising specialty areas of practice (N3ET, 2006).

**Figure 2 Credentialling Framework as part of a continuum of specialist practice**



### **Revised Principles and Development of the Standards**

A first step in the development of the CoNNO National Nurse Credentialling Framework was to determine the Principles for credentialling. This involved a revision of the existing NNO Principles. The Revised Principles reflect new developments in the understanding of credentialling. The Revised Principles, together with the Standards and Criteria, represent the National Nurse Credentialling Framework and aim to bring national consistency to the credentialling of specialist nursing practice in Australia.

The Standards are guided and underpinned by the Revised Principles. The Principles represent the ‘high concepts’ which on the one hand stand alone and on the other determine the requirements articulated in the Standards. In some cases, one Standard covers the territory of more than one Principle, hence there are fewer (10) Standards than there are Revised Principles (13). Each Standard is accompanied by a set of criteria providing more specific guidance with regard to operational requirements and expectations of credentialling.

## Using the CoNNO National Nurse Credentialling Framework

The Framework aims to provide practical direction to organisations to formulate specific requirements for credentialling. They are intended to be used by organisations:

- as a benchmark for the development of credentialling specific to their specialty/area of nursing practice;
- to achieve national consistency with credentialling for other specialties/areas of nursing practice.

## About the Model Credentialling Process

The credentialling process made up of the Principles and Standards has been divided into 4 elements. These are:

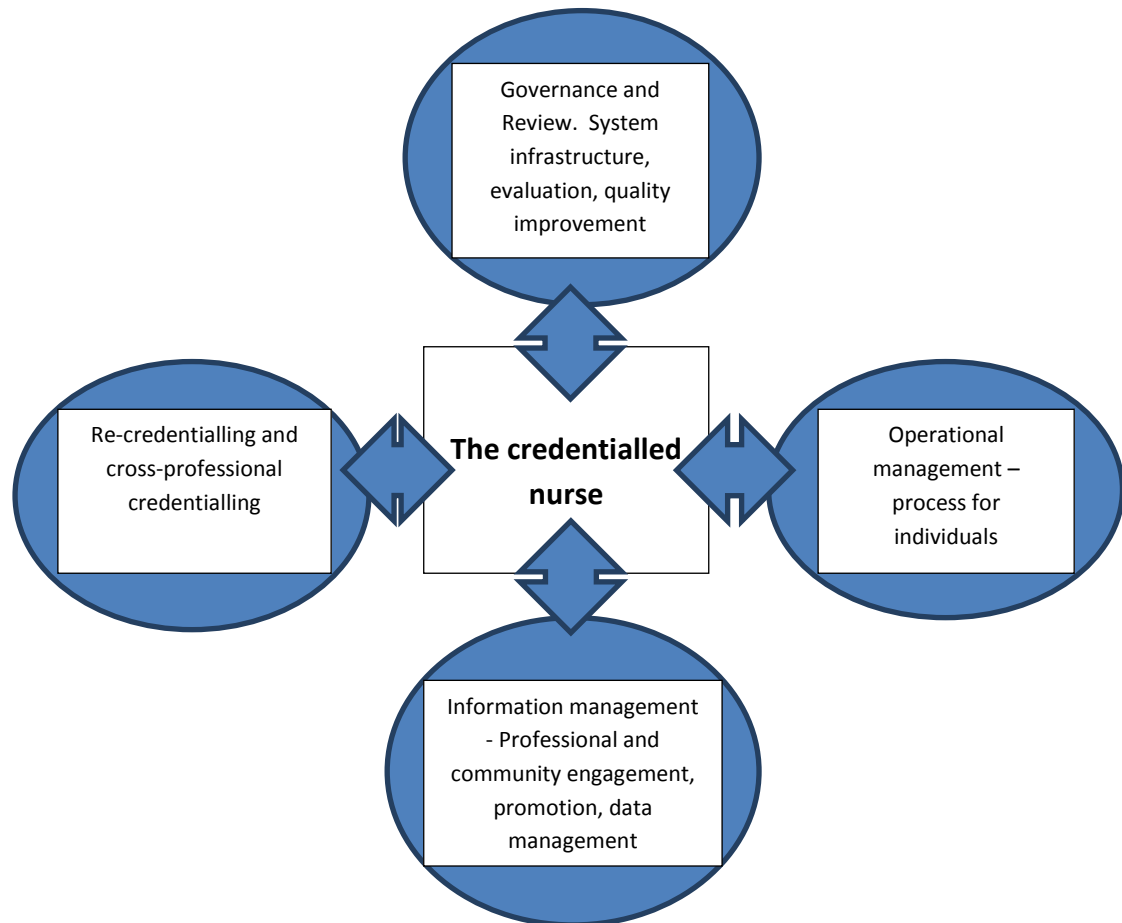
- Governance and Review
- Operational management
- Information management
- Management of re-credentialling and cross-specialty credentialling

These four elements are expressed in Figure 3 below.



## Elements of credentialling

Figure 3:



The Model Credentialling Process below is the master document of the Toolkit and indicates how the resources in this Toolkit assist implementation of the Standards and Criteria organised under these four elements.

Supporting the Model Credentialling Process are the following Resources:

1. **Resource Sheet 1: Self-assessment Tool for evaluation of credentialling process**
2. **Resource Sheet 2: Guidelines for developing nurse credentialling applications**
3. **Resource Sheet 3: Guidelines for consumer engagement**
4. **Resource Sheet 4: Guidelines for external expert engagement**
5. **Resource Sheet 5: Guidelines for developing an appeals process**
6. **Resource Sheet 6: Principles of cultural respect, equal employment and anti- discrimination**
7. **Resource Sheet 7: Credentialling pathway and flowchart**
8. **Resource Sheet 8: Memoranda of understanding**

## References

Coalition of National Nursing Organisations (CoNNO) (2010a) Welcome to the Coalition of National Nursing Organisations (CoNNO) website. Retrieved 6 June 2011

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

CoNNO (2010b) National Nurse Credentialling Framework 2010-11 Project Plan (unpublished)

International Council of Nurses (ICN) (1992) *Guidelines on Specialisation in nursing*. Geneva: International Council of Nurses.

National Nursing and Nursing Education Taskforce (N3ET) (2006) *A National Specialisation Framework for Nursing and Midwifery*. Melbourne: National Nursing and Nursing Education Taskforce. Retrieved 6 December 2010 from

[http://www.nnnet.gov.au/downloads/recsp\\_spec\\_framework.pdf](http://www.nnnet.gov.au/downloads/recsp_spec_framework.pdf)

National Nursing Organisations (NNO) (2004) *Glossary of Terms: Criteria for Specialties in Nursing / Principles of Credentialling for Nurses* 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Retrieved 6 December 2010 from

[http://www.conno.org.au/pdf/NNO\\_Glossary\\_of\\_Terms.pdf](http://www.conno.org.au/pdf/NNO_Glossary_of_Terms.pdf)

Please note. Links to websites provided in the Toolkit were valid at time of publication but may be subject to change.

## Model Credentialling Process:

### A guide to meeting the National Nurse Credentialling Framework Standards and Criteria

No.	CoNNO National Nurse Credentialling Framework: Standards and Criteria	Guide to Meeting the Standards and Criteria
	<b>Governance and Review</b>	
1	<p><b>Credentialling processes demonstrate recognition of and consistency with the CoNNO Credentialling Principles, National Nurse Credentialling Framework, and CoNNO Governance Standards</b></p> <p><b>Criteria</b></p> <p>The organisation establishes that the credentialling process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is underpinned by and consistent with the CoNNO Principles and Framework</li> <li>• is consistent with established CoNNO best practice Governance Standards</li> <li>• demonstrates quality improvement processes, including external review of credentialling processes at a minimum every five years</li> </ul>	<p><b>Assess</b> consistency with CONNO Credentialling Framework (See Resource sheet 1, <a href="#">Self-assessment tool for evaluation of credentialling process</a>)</p> <p><b>Consult</b> the CoNNO best practice <a href="#">Governance Standards for Nursing and Midwifery Organisations</a>.</p> <p><b>Develop</b> a Quality Improvement Action Plan. (See Resource sheet 1, <a href="#">Self-Assessment tool for evaluation of credentialling process</a>; see Resource sheet 4 on <a href="#">Guidelines for external expert engagement</a>)</p>

2	<p><b>Credentialling is a voluntary undertaking by organisations and identifies benefits and demand for credentialling within the specialty/area of nursing practice.</b></p> <p><b>Criteria</b></p> <p>The organisation establishes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• credentialling is offered as a voluntary service to individual nurses</li> <li>• there is demonstrated need for credentialling in the specialty / area of nursing practice</li> </ul>	<p><b>Promotion</b> of credentialling process should indicate that process is voluntary.</p> <p><b>Establish</b> evidence of need. eg. member requests, evidence of industry incentives, evidence of organisational readiness for credentialling.</p>
3	<p><b>Credentialling processes demonstrate recognition of and consistency with the current professional nursing practice standards established by the relevant professional nursing organisations</b></p> <p><b>Criteria</b></p> <p>The organisation establishes processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• for informing nurses about the current professional nursing practice standards relevant to the specialty/area of nursing practice</li> <li>• that identify requirements for seeking a credential in the nursing specialty/area of nursing practice</li> </ul>	<p><b>Identify</b> and provide links to established standards relevant to specialty/area of nursing practice</p> <p><b>Provide/Develop</b> checklists for potential applicants. See Resource sheet 2, <a href="#">Guidelines for developing nurse credentialling applications</a></p>
4	<p><b>The criteria for eligibility for credentialling reflect evidence of best practice in the nursing specialty / area of nursing practice, and include a combination of: specified minimum levels of education, specified minimum levels of practice or experience,</b></p>	<p><b>Establish</b> best practice requirements based on practice standards relevant to specialty/area of nursing practice.</p>

	<p><b>and continuing professional development requirements.</b></p> <p><b>Criteria</b></p> <p>The organisation establishes that credentialling criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reflect best practice requirements in nursing specialty/area of nursing practice , including research and leadership experience</li> <li>• specify minimum levels of practice and/or experience, and recency of practice in nursing specialty/area of nursing practice</li> <li>• specify minimum level of education in nursing specialty / area of nursing practice</li> <li>• specify continuing professional development requirements in nursing specialty / area of nursing practice, consistent with regulatory requirements</li> </ul>	<p><b>Develop</b> policies and statements relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• minimum levels of practice and/or experience;</li> <li>• minimum level of education in nursing specialty / area of nursing practice;</li> <li>• continuing professional development requirements in nursing specialty / area of nursing practice.</li> </ul>
5	<p><b>Credentialling processes are fair, transparent, robust and nationally consistent.</b></p> <p><b>Criteria</b></p> <p>The organisation establishes that credentialling processes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• development of the credentialling program to include external consultation processes, including consumer engagement</li> <li>• a credentialling committee to assess applications</li> </ul>	<p><b>Develop</b> policies and statements supporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• external consultation processes, including consumer engagement</li> <li>• establishing a credentialling committee to assess applications</li> </ul> <p>See Resources :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource Sheet 3 <a href="#">Guidelines for consumer</a></li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• application of governance standards for the credentialling program and committee</li> <li>• minimum training/education requirements for assessors</li> <li>• processes to measure inter-rater reliability of assessors</li> <li>• mechanisms to encourage, support and provide equity of access to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurses</li> <li>○ culturally and linguistically diverse nurses</li> <li>○ other people underrepresented in the profession</li> <li>○ geographically isolated nurses</li> </ul> </li> <li>• application of the principles of cultural respect, equal employment and anti-discrimination throughout the credentialling process</li> <li>• follow up mechanisms when negative feedback is received about a credentialled nurse</li> <li>• a documented appeals process</li> <li>• guidance to applicants about the appropriate use of credentialling status.</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">engagement</a> and Resource Sheet 4 <a href="#">Guidelines for external expert engagement</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource sheet 6 <a href="#">Principles of cultural respect, equal employment and anti-discrimination</a></li> <li>• Resource sheet 5 <a href="#">Guidelines for developing an appeals process</a></li> </ul>
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	<b>Operational Management</b>	
<b>6</b>	<p><b>Credentiailling processes credential the individual nurse</b></p> <p><b>Criteria</b></p> <p>The organisation establishes processes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• verify current Australian registration or enrolment status of the individual nurse</li> <li>• detail the pathway for the individual nurse to achieve credentiailling</li> <li>• determine eligibility for credentiailling of the individual nurse</li> <li>• confer an appropriate and exclusive title for the credential</li> </ul>	<p>See Resource sheet 7 <a href="#">Credentiailling pathway and flowchart</a></p> <p><b>Develop</b> eligibility criteria (align with policies and statements developed for Standard 4)</p> <p><b>Determine</b> title for credential and Terms and Conditions for holding Credential.</p>
<b>7</b>	<p><b>Applicants for credentiailling meet current professional nursing practice standards relevant to the nursing specialty / area of nursing practice</b></p> <p><b>Criteria</b></p> <p>The organisation establishes processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that verify relevant education, qualifications and experience of the applicant, including robust processes for establishing legitimacy of documentation</li> <li>• for assessing the capacity of the applicant to meet the professional nursing practice standards</li> </ul>	<p><b>Determine</b> method(s) of assessing capability of applicants to meet standards. See Resource sheet 2 <a href="#">Guidelines for developing nurse credentiailling applications</a></p>

	<b>Information Management</b>	
<b>8</b>	<p><b>Information relating to credentialling processes and current credentialled nurses be in the public domain as a demonstration of professional accountability.</b></p> <p><b>Criteria</b></p> <p>The organisation establishes processes/policies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify and manage confidential and non-confidential information</li> <li>• securely store all data relating to the credentialling process and individual credentialled nurses</li> <li>• publish credentialling policies/processes on nominated websites</li> <li>• enable publication of credentialled nurses and their title</li> <li>• maintain currency of credentialling policies, processes and lists of credentialled nurses</li> </ul>	<b>Develop</b> policy based on appropriate best practice standards for management of confidential information
	<b>Management of Re-credentialling and Cross-specialty Credentialling</b>	
<b>9</b>	<b>Credentialling includes processes and criteria for re-credentialling that are consistent with the principles and standards which apply to initial credentialling</b>	<b>Develop</b> policies to indicate re-credentialling process



	<p><b>Criteria</b></p> <p>The organisation establishes processes for re-credentialling that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mandate re-credentialling be undertaken at a minimum every three years</li> <li>• achieve parity of outcomes with the initial credentialling process</li> <li>• include requirements and provisions relating to recency of practice, consistent with regulatory requirements</li> </ul>	
10	<p><b>Credentialling includes processes and criteria for recognition of equivalence of cross-specialty credentialling where relevant</b></p> <p><b>Criteria</b></p> <p>The organisation establishes processes which include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using the CoNNO Credentialling Principles and National Nurse Credentialling Framework to benchmark with credentialling processes provided by other professional nursing/health organisations to establish equivalence of credentials</li> <li>• development of Memoranda of Understanding with professional nursing/health organisations offering credentialling processes of equivalence to the CoNNO National Nurse Credentialling Framework</li> </ul>	<p><b>Use</b> Resource Sheet 1 <a href="#">Self-Assessment Tool for evaluation of credentialling process</a> to help assess organisational readiness for credentialling</p> <p><b>Refer to</b> Resource sheet 8 <a href="#">Memoranda of Understanding</a></p>

## Resource Sheet 1

### Self-Assessment Tool for evaluation of credentialling process

This self-assessment tool should be used to assess your organisation's credentialling process against the CoNNO National Credentialling Framework during the development stage of the process, and also as part of the process of evaluation. The outcomes of this self-assessment should be used in formulating a **quality improvement action plan**. Note – some components may not be relevant to all organisations. For example, Standard 10 may not be relevant to certain specialties/areas of nursing practice, when there are no like organisations with which to benchmark.

Standard No.	Question	Response	Action Required	Person responsible	Date for completion
1	Does your organisation's credentialling process meet established CoNNO best practice Governance Standards	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Does your organisation's credentialling process have quality improvement processes in place, including external review of credentialling processes at a minimum every five years?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
2	Has your organisation established the need for your credentialling process?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Is your credentialling process voluntary for members of your organisation?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			

Standard No.	Question	Response	Action Required	Person responsible	Date for completion
3	Has your organisation developed endorsed professional nursing practice standards relevant to the specialty/area of nursing practice?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Does your organisation provide easy access to these standards for nurses working in the specialty/area of nursing practice?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Does your organisation have processes in place to promote the requirements for credentialling in the specialty/area of nursing practice?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
4	Has your organisation developed credentialling criteria which reflect best practice, consistent with the standards of the nursing specialty/area of nursing practice?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Do the criteria specify minimum levels of practice and/or experience?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Do the criteria refer to recency of practice policies?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Do the criteria include reference to minimum levels of education in the nursing specialty/area of nursing practice?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Do the criteria include reference to continuing professional development requirements in the nursing specialty/area of nursing practice?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Are the continuing professional	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>			

Standard No.	Question	Response	Action Required	Person responsible	Date for completion
	development requirements consistent with regulatory requirements?	No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
5	Is your organisation able to provide evidence of utilising consumer participation in the development of its credentialling process?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Has your organisation established a credentialling committee to assess or oversee applications for credentialling?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Is your organisation able to provide evidence of governance standards for the operation of the credentialling committee?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Has your organisation established minimum training/education requirements for assessors?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Is your organisation able to provide evidence of established processes to measure inter-rater reliability of assessors?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Is your organisation able to demonstrate mechanisms to support access to the credentialling process by groups under represented in the profession, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurses, culturally and linguistically diverse nurses and those who are geographically isolated?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Is your organisation able to provide evidence of policies and practices which	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			

Standard No.	Question	Response	Action Required	Person responsible	Date for completion
	demonstrate application of the principles of cultural respect, equal employment and anti- discrimination throughout the credentialling process	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
	In the event of an adverse report being received about a credentialed nurse, does your organisation have mechanisms in place for managing such cases?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Does your organisation have an appeals process in place?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Does your organisation provide guidance to successful applicants about the appropriate use of the credentialling status?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
6	Does your organisation have its own processes in place to verify the registration or enrolment status of the nurse	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Does your organisation have processes in place to detail the pathway for credentialling in the specialty/area of nursing practice? (see Standard 3 above)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Does your organisation have mechanisms in place to establish the eligibility for credentialling the individual nurse?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Has your organisation established an appropriate and exclusive title for the credential?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
7	Is your organisation able to demonstrate	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>			

Standard No.	Question	Response	Action Required	Person responsible	Date for completion
	robust processes for verifying the qualifications and education claims of applicants?	No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Has your organisation established a mechanism for assessing the capacity of the applicant to meet the professional nursing practice standards?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
8	Has your organisation established information management processes which identify and protect confidential information?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Is your organisation able to demonstrate the capacity to maintain records of credentialed nurses and applicants for credentialling?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Is your organisation able to demonstrate the capacity to maintain currency of credentialling policies, processes and lists of credentialed nurses?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
9	Has your organisation developed a re-credentialling policy which mandates re-credentialling is required at a minimum of every 3 years?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Does your organisation's re-credentialling policy include requirements and provisions relating to recency of practice?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Is your organisation's re-credentialling policy consistent with regulatory requirements?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Does your organisation's re-credentialling	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>			

Standard No.	Question	Response	Action Required	Person responsible	Date for completion
	process achieve parity of outcomes with the initial credentialling process?	No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
10	Has your organisation developed mechanisms for establishing equivalence of credentials?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Has your organisation developed a credentialling policy for managing Memoranda of Understanding with other credentialling organisations?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			

## Resource Sheet 2

### Guidelines for developing nurse credentialling applications

#### Design of the Application Kit

It is important for the application process to be designed appropriately in order to meet Standards 3,4,5,7 and 8 and the respective criteria of the Credentialling Framework. It is suggested that an **application kit** should be designed which includes:

1. An application form
2. Guidelines for completing the application form
3. Details of documents and evidence required to accompany the application (this may include evidence of: recency of practice, clinical experience performance review processes, competency assessments, continuing professional development requirements)
4. Details of how documents and evidence should be certified (ie. witnessed by a Justice of the Peace, statutory declaration made by applicant, signatures of authenticity provided by professional colleagues)
5. A flowchart to demonstrate the application process including expected timeframes for each stage (consult model flowchart – Resource sheet )
6. Other details relating to additional credentialling processes (such as information about specialist examinations, venues, times, examples of the format of the examinations)
7. Any costs associated with the credentialling application, payment methods and policies relating to refunds.
8. Information relating to the re-credentialling policy and process. (A separate application form may be required for re-credentialling).
9. Information relating to the organisation's policy on displaying names of credentialled nurses in the public domain
10. Details of the appeals process
11. General statement relating to the need for applicants to consider reviewing any public liability, professional indemnity or products liability insurance requirements which may be associated with the successful award of a credential (see below for further information)
12. A privacy statement. (See below for further information)

#### Application Forms

In order for an organisation to assess the appropriateness of an application, it is important to design application forms which clearly request details and evidence of all the necessary information. The following list suggests the **minimum** information which should be



obtained. In addition, each individual organisation should consider specific information and requirements relating to the specialty/area of nursing practice.

**1. Personal information:**

- Title
- Gender
- First name(s) and Surname
- Residential address
- Postal address
- Contact telephone numbers
- Date of birth
- Any additional organisation specific information – eg. details of organisational membership

**2. Registration status**

- Current registration status (ie. currently an RN, EN or Nurse Practitioner )
- Registration number(s)
- Expiry date of current registration(s)
- Any existing restrictions in place

**3. Higher Education qualifications relevant to specialty / area of nursing practice**

- Education provider, name of award(s) (ie. B.Health Science, M. Nurse Practitioner, PhD), location, year of award

**4. Professional qualifications relevant to specialty / area of nursing practice**

- Qualifications relating to the specialty/area of nursing practice – name of qualification, duration of course, education provider and location, date of completion. (eg. hospital-based certificates, certificates provided by registered training organisations relating to specialty/area of nursing practice)
- Other – name of qualification, education provider and location, date of completion (eg. enrolled nurse programs run by the Vocational Education and Training sector)

**5. Other relevant academic or professional activities**

(This may include completion of generic courses which support the individual's credentialling application for a specialty/area of nursing practice – such as completion of a certificate in research studies, a project management course).

**6. Professional Experience**

- details of recency of practice

- clinical experience in the specialty area, including details of time worked (in full time equivalent weeks/months/years), location of experience, level of position (eg. clinical nurse specialist, nurse manager)
- Other clinical experience

## 7. Other (non-clinical) work experience

## 8. Contact details of referees

It is recommended that guidance be provided about suitability of referees and number required. For example, the organisation may choose to request that referees should have held a supervisory position to the applicant or had direct involvement in assessing the professional practice of the applicant.

## 9. Declaration made by applicant

Applicants should be required to sign a declaration stating that they agree to the terms and conditions of the organisation with respect to the credentialling process and authority to use a credentialling title. The declaration may also request authorisation to contact any referees or professional peers to support the application.

### Further information relating to the design and content of Application Kits and forms

There are several existing application kits and forms located on Australian credentialling websites which may assist organisations in designing their own. **Copyright must be respected in all cases**, and it is strongly recommended that early contact be made and written permission sought from other organisations when viewing application forms with the intention of replicating any design features. The following sites may be of assistance:

Australian College of Mental Health Nurses

<http://acmhn.org/credentialling/applying-for-credentialling.html>

Australian Association of Stoma Therapy Nurses

<http://www.stomatherapy.com/credentialling.htm>

Australian Infection Control Association

<http://www.aica.org.au/default.asp?PageID=86&n=Downloads>

### Privacy Statement

Privacy relating to storage and use of personal data must be respected and meet Commonwealth and state privacy legislation. A privacy statement should be included in the Application Kit. For further information about protecting other people's information, credentialling organisations should visit:

<http://www.privacy.gov.au/materials/types/guidelines/view/6849>

**Public liability, professional indemnity or products liability insurance requirements**

As the implications and risks associated with holding a credential in a specialty/area of practice will vary, information provided should be of a general nature unless specific information has been obtained by the credentialing organisation. Applicants should be advised to seek specialist insurance and/or legal advice, or contact professional and industrial bodies which provide such insurance. These include the Australian Nursing Federation and Royal College of Nursing, Australia:

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

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

**Disclaimers**

Organisations seeking to introduce credentialing processes are strongly advised to seek legal advice with regard to placing appropriate disclaimers in the application kit.

## Resource Sheet 3

### Guidelines for consumer engagement

In order to most effectively engage with consumers in the credentialling process, the credentialling organisation should consider the development of a consumer consultation plan, which clearly identifies the purpose, the areas where consultation will be beneficial, and the perceived outcomes of consumer engagement. There are many resources and examples of consumer consultation plans available which may provide assistance. These include:

<http://www.silverchain.org.au/.../Rpt-Consumer-Participation-Framework-01111- V2.pdf>

<http://pandora.nla.gov.au/tep/51819>

<http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pan/10767/20020417-0000/www.ruralhealth.org.au/sixthconf/hall3paper.htm>

<http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pan/46895/20051105-0000/www.participateinhealth.org.au/clearinghouse/Docs/cfcedandtrainreport.pdf>

<http://www.healthissuescentre.org.au/subjects/list-library-subject.shtml?subject=24>

The Consumers Health Forum website also provides many useful resources including fact sheets and guidelines both for organisations considering inviting consumer participation, and for consumers considering becoming representatives. These are available at:

<https://www.chf.org.au/resources-guidelines.php>

Active involvement of consumers at all levels of the development, implementation and evaluation of health strategies and processes such as credentialling, is integral to their success.

Potential Benefits of consumer engagement for an organisation developing a credentialling process include:

- Processes are better targeted to meet the need of the consumer and are more likely to meet consumer expectations
- By the inclusion of external input, decisions relating to credentialling processes and individual credentiallees are made in a more visible and transparent manner by the inclusion of external input
- Individual consumers may have better health outcomes
- People traditionally marginalised by mainstream health services are provided with an opportunity to provide input

Further relevant considerations by credentialling organisations include:

The different perspectives, experiences and skills of all those involved in the credentialling process, including consumer representatives, need to be acknowledged and valued by all staff and committee members

There are likely to be costs and resource implications associated with consumer engagement.

Consumer representatives should be able to represent the views of a wide range of consumers, and be accountable to them through appropriate mechanisms such as consumer organisations

Consumers invited to join credentialling committees need to be provided with appropriate orientation and information in order to ensure the effective operation of the committee

Consumer participation should be a continuous process – not a token involvement.

### **How can consumers provide input to the credentialling process?**

#### **How should a consumer be selected?**

- Identify the stages of the credentialling process where a consumer's input will be useful
- Identify what specific skills, knowledge and experiences are required in the respective positions. It is vital to have the right person for the right position – and in order to achieve this, the roles and expectations of consumer representatives must be clear at the time they are recruited.
- Develop criteria for selecting the consumer
- Develop an information pack for potential consumers which explains the credentialling process of the organisation, and the role of the consumer in the respective elements of the credentialling process

The following checklist may be useful when introducing consumer engagement.

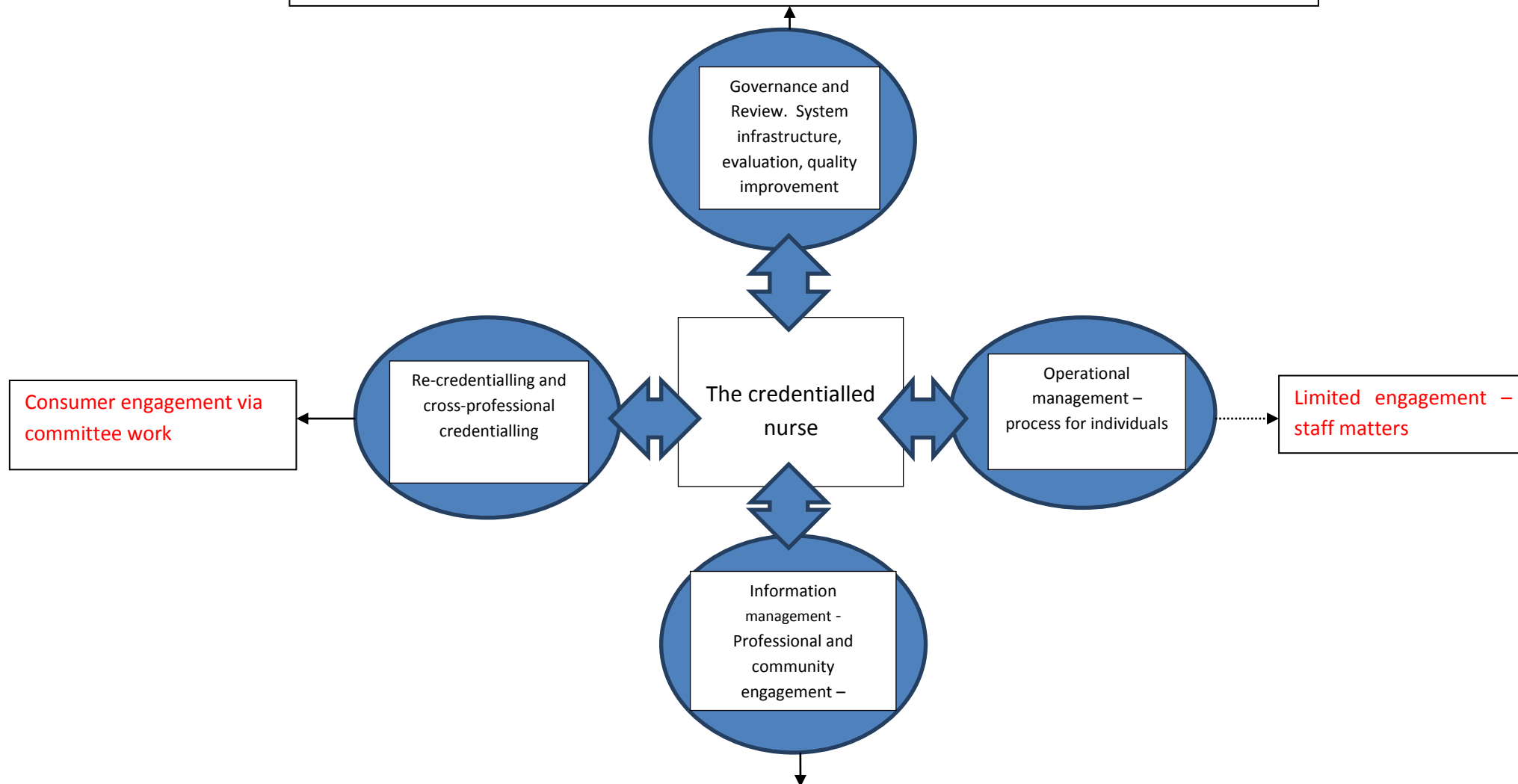
### Checklist for Consumer Participation

Issue	Yes/No	Action
Does the organisation have agreement about how consumer engagement can be utilised in developing a credentialling process and/or in providing input to the credentialling process?		
Has a consumer engagement plan been developed?		
Have consumer organisations (such as the Consumers Health Forum) been consulted for their assistance?		
Have criteria been developed for selection of suitable consumers?		
Have resources been developed to orientate consumers to their roles?		
Have evaluation processes for measuring the effectiveness of consumer engagement been considered?		

The [Diagram of Possible Areas of Consumer Engagement](#) below provides suggestions of how consumer participation may be included in the 4 elements of the credentialling framework.

## Diagram of Possible Areas of Consumer Engagement

- Consumer participation in development of credentialling process
- Consumer participation in credentialling committee
- Consumer participation in internal and/or external review processes



- Engagement with consumers to:**
- publicise the process of credentialling
  - role of a credentialled nurse,
  - feedback about credentialled nurses

## Resource sheet 4

### Guidelines for external expert engagement

When considering utilising expert input to credentialling processes, issues for consideration may be similar to those required when engaging with consumers. A specific issue which may arise, however, relates to conflict of interest. Where small specialist organisations are concerned, there may be a limited pool of experts within the field, and close friendships exist across the organisation and/or area of practice. In this case, overseas experts may need to be considered to provide a broader view.

The following check list may be of assistance.

Issue	Yes/No	Action
Does the organisation have agreement about how and when expert engagement will be utilised in developing a credentialling process and/or in providing input to the credentialling process?		
Have criteria been developed for selection of suitable experts?		
Have management processes for conflict of interest been considered?		
Have resources been developed to orientate experts to their roles?		
Have benchmarking processes for evaluation of expert input been considered?		



## Resource Sheet 5

### Guidelines for developing an appeals process

In order to ensure fairness and equity principles are applied to all applicants, it is important to develop as a minimum a statement relating to the management of unsuccessful applications, and also to clearly identify any grounds for appeal, and the appeals process.

As many potential appeals can be avoided by good communication throughout the application process, in the first instance organisations should promote their willingness to discuss specific issues arising directly with applicants.

In light of potential conflict which may arise from unsuccessful applications, organisations are advised to seek legal advice about their appeals process to ensure its legal standing.

The following check list may be of assistance to organisations developing their appeals process.

Issue	Yes/No	Action
Has a statement relating to the existence of an appeals process been prepared?		
Is the statement provided in materials given to all applicants at the time of their initial application or when re-credentialling?		
Have grounds for appeal been identified?		
Have processes for managing appeals been established?		
Have timeframes for managing the appeals process been identified?		
Have conflict resolution processes been established?		
Have statements relating to unsuccessful appeals been developed?		
Has the appeals process been reviewed by a legal practitioner?		

## Resource sheet 6

### Principles of cultural respect, equal employment and anti- discrimination

Standard 5 of the CoNNO National Nurse Credentialling Framework expects that:

**Credentialling processes are fair, transparent, robust and nationally consistent.**

The criteria sitting under Standard 5 include two that speak to issues of cultural respect, equal employment and anti-discrimination:

The organisation establishes that credentialling processes include:

- mechanisms to encourage, support and provide equity of access to:
  - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurses
  - culturally and linguistically diverse nurses
  - other people underrepresented in the profession
  - geographically isolated nurses

and

- application of the principles of cultural respect, equal employment and anti-discrimination throughout the credentialling process

Some resources that may assist organisations to implement these criteria are provided below:

#### Cultural Respect

The definition of Cultural Respect used in the CoNNO National Nurse Credentialling Framework is from the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council (AHMAC) (2004) *Cultural Respect Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health 2004-2009*:

the recognition, protection and continued advancement of the inherent rights, cultures and traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples .

In addition to this National Cultural Respect Framework, a number of State/territory specific resources on cultural respect have been developed. In addition, links to other national resources that may provide further support for organisations in implementing the principle of cultural respect are provided:

- Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council (AHMAC) (2004) *Cultural Respect Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health 2004-2009*, South Australian Department of Health. Retrieved 2 April 2011, from <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/health-oatsih-pubs-crf.htm>

- WA Health Aboriginal Cultural Respect – Implementation Framework (2005)  
[http://www.aboriginal.health.wa.gov.au/docs/Cultural\\_Respect\\_Implementation\\_Framework.pdf](http://www.aboriginal.health.wa.gov.au/docs/Cultural_Respect_Implementation_Framework.pdf)
- ACT Health Cultural Respect Implementation Plan 2006-2009 (2006)  
<http://www.health.act.gov.au/c/health?a=dlpol&policy=1150855353>
- Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency. *Aboriginal Cultural Competence Framework*. October (2008)  
<[http://www.cyf.vic.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0008/312668/framework\\_cultural\\_support\\_2008.pdf](http://www.cyf.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/312668/framework_cultural_support_2008.pdf)>
- *National Indigenous Law and Justice Framework Good Practice Appendix* (2010)  
[http://www.ag.gov.au/www/agd/rwpattach.nsf/VAP/\(8AB0BDE05570AAD0EF9C283AA8F533E3\)~IPS+-+National+Indigenous+Law+and+Justice+Framework+-+NILJF+-+Good+Practice+Appendix+-+FINAL+-+PDF+version.PDF/\\$file/IPS+-+National+Indigenous+Law+and+Justice+Framework+-+NILJF+-+Good+Practice+Appendix+-+FINAL+-+PDF+version.PDF](http://www.ag.gov.au/www/agd/rwpattach.nsf/VAP/(8AB0BDE05570AAD0EF9C283AA8F533E3)~IPS+-+National+Indigenous+Law+and+Justice+Framework+-+NILJF+-+Good+Practice+Appendix+-+FINAL+-+PDF+version.PDF/$file/IPS+-+National+Indigenous+Law+and+Justice+Framework+-+NILJF+-+Good+Practice+Appendix+-+FINAL+-+PDF+version.PDF)
- Agreements, Treaties and Negotiated Settlements (ATNS) Project  
<http://www.atns.net.au/default.asp>
- Australian Human Rights Commission (2009) *2008 Social Justice Report*  
[http://www.hreoc.gov.au/social\\_justice/sj\\_report/sjreport08/downloads/SJR\\_2008\\_full.pdf](http://www.hreoc.gov.au/social_justice/sj_report/sjreport08/downloads/SJR_2008_full.pdf)

### Equal employment

- Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency  
[http://www.eowa.gov.au/About\\_EOWA.asp](http://www.eowa.gov.au/About_EOWA.asp), including a page on developing a workplace program that contributes to equal employment opportunity:  
[http://www.eowa.gov.au/Reporting\\_And\\_Compliance\\_LandingPage.asp](http://www.eowa.gov.au/Reporting_And_Compliance_LandingPage.asp), and a 'Research and Resources' page:  
[http://www.eowa.gov.au/Research\\_And\\_Resources.asp](http://www.eowa.gov.au/Research_And_Resources.asp)

### Anti-discrimination

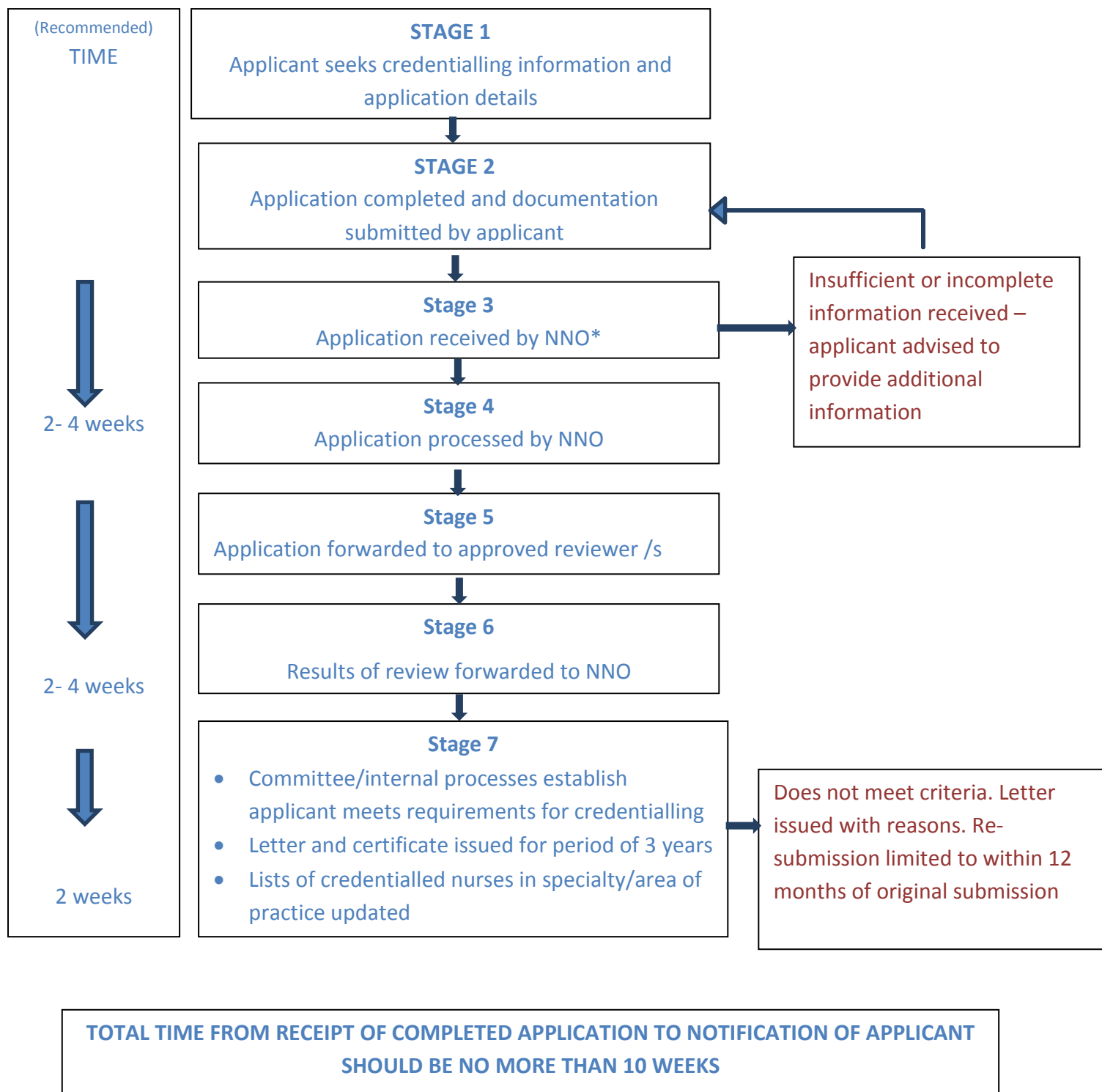
- The Australian Human Rights Commission has pages and linked resources covering human rights broadly, and age, race and sex discrimination specifically  
<http://www.hreoc.gov.au/>
- Australia's National Framework for Human Rights (2004)  
<http://www.wwda.org.au/austnaphr1.pdf>

## Resource Sheet 7

### Credentiailling pathway and flowchart

The recommended process for credentiailling individual applications is displayed in the following flowchart. Timeframes for the various components are suggestions only, but represent best practice when benchmarked with existing processes.

\*NNO = National Nursing Organisation



## Resource Sheet 8

### Memoranda of Understanding

A **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** is a tool by which organisations can consolidate their shared understanding of their separate and joint responsibilities in a mutual undertaking.

It can articulate some business 'rules' to which each party to the MOU subscribes. It can establish and help to manage expectations, scope commitment, and guide behaviour.

Common arrangements articulated in MOUs include:

- Partner A's responsibilities
- Partner B's responsibilities
- A and B's joint responsibilities
- Resources
- Duration of Understanding
- Termination of Understanding
- Conflict Management

MOUs are used in a wide array of partnering situations to express mutually agreed arrangements. They can be used to express the relationship, for example, between: government and non-government partners; different non-government organisations; international sector organisations and national or local organisations.

In the context of organisations involved in credentialling wishing to express a relationship through which they may recognise each others' processes and/or outcomes (as in Standard 10), the MOU might seek to address the following:

- A Statement of Purpose (eg. This MOU is formed between Organisation A and Organisation B to recognise equivalence of cross-specialty credentialling)
- The form that this recognition is understood to take by the organisations (eg. organisations offer reciprocal credentialled status to nurses who are already credentialled with the partner organisation)
- The limits around this recognition (eg. the partner organisations continue to comply with the CoNNO National Nurse Credentialling Framework; the nurse must apply to the partner organisation to become credentialled with the partner organisation and meet any additional requirements of the partner organisation; if the partner organisation is not a CoNNO member, method for determining equivalence is clarified)
- Each organisation's individual responsibilities under the MOU (eg. continuing to comply or demonstrating equivalence with the CoNNO National Nurse Credentialling

Framework; documenting any additional requirements to be met by the applicant and consulting with the partner organisation on these)

- Joint responsibilities/undertakings under the MOU (eg. agreement around cost sharing or cost separation)

Resources that may assist organisations in preparing an MOU that expresses the parameters of the relationship that they are seeking to establish include:

- Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (2001) *Assessing Using Partnership Arrangements* [An ANTA publication]  
[http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/training\\_skills/publications\\_resources/profiles/anta/profile/assessment\\_using\\_partnership\\_arrangements.htm](http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/training_skills/publications_resources/profiles/anta/profile/assessment_using_partnership_arrangements.htm)
- Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. *Memorandum of Understanding Template*  
<http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/partnerships/mout.pdf>
- Waples-Crowe, P. and Pyett, P. (2005) *The Making of a Great Relationship: A review of a healthy partnership between mainstream and Indigenous organisations*. Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation. Melbourne.  
<http://www.ahmrc.org.au/Downloads/CRIAH%20Tools%20for%20Collaboration%20ver1%20December2007/1%20Background/The%20making%20of%20a%20great%20relationship.pdf>
- Bartel, D., S. Igras and J. Chamberlain (May 2007, Revised Edition) *Building Partnerships for Health in Conflict Affected Settings: a practical guide to beginning and sustaining inter-agency partnerships*.  
<http://www.rhrc.org/resources/BuildingPartnershipsforHealth.pdf>
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2006) UNDP and Civil Society Organizations. *A Toolkit for Strengthening Partnerships*.  
[http://www.undp.org/partners/civil\\_society/publications/CSO\\_Toolkit\\_linked.pdf](http://www.undp.org/partners/civil_society/publications/CSO_Toolkit_linked.pdf)
- Slavik Cohen, P. And S. Moorhead (2006) *Current Issues in Nursing*, seventh edition, Mosby Inc., St. Louis., chapter 13 on collaborative partnerships includes discussion of constructing an MOU.

## **Certificate of Achievement Template**

Provided as an attachment. A possible template for organisations to use for presenting successful applicants with a record of their credentialling entitlement.