Faculty of Health Sciences
Department of Clinical Nursing

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE ASSESSMENT OF OVERSEAS-QUALIFIED NURSES

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Thesis submitted to the University of Adelaide for fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

Policies underpinning the processes used by nurse regulatory authorities to assess overseas-qualified nurses (OQNs) vary from country to country. Some countries’ policies are to undertake paper-based assessments of nurses’ initial and post registration education and experience, while others require all nurses to undertake a generic examination. How these policies were developed and why, were pivotal questions in this study. The aim of the study was, to critically analyse the policy development and policies relating to assessment of overseas-qualified nurses in thirteen nurse regulatory authorities from Australia and overseas. Using Critical Social Theory as the theoretical underpinning a critical policy analysis was undertaken. Data was obtained from policies and procedures, interviews, organisational websites, annual reports and Nurses Acts. The process of development of these policies and procedures was analysed using Bridgman and Davis’ policy cycle. The study revealed that only one organisation used a framework to develop policies on the assessment of OQNs. Policy analysis in most organisations was based on anecdotal evidence and experiential knowledge of Board staff. No organisation had conducted research on whether overseas-qualified nurses were competent to practice following a paper-based assessment or an examination. This study demonstrated that policies used to assess OQNs were not developed from an evidence-based perspective. This highlights the need to undertake internationally collaborative research on the evaluation of current policies, in order to develop future policies that determine the competence of a nurse to practice in another country.
STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the university library, being available for loan and photocopying.

Diane Wickett

Date:
GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Competence
The combination of skills, knowledge, attitudes, values and abilities that underpin effective and/or superior performance in a profession/occupational area.

Competent
The person has competence across all domains of competencies applicable to the nurse, at a standard judged to be appropriate for the level of nurse being assessed.

Enrolled Nurse
A person licensed to practice nursing under an Australian State or Territory Nurses Act under the supervision of a registered nurse.

Migrant Bridging Program
A program, which consists of theory and clinical components and provides an avenue for migrant nurses to demonstrate the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council competency standards for registered or enrolled nurses in Australia.

Overseas-Qualified Nurse
A nurse and/or midwife who holds registration in a country, which is different to the country in which they are applying to register in order to practice.
**Registered Midwife**

A person licensed to practice midwifery under an Australian State/Territory or overseas country’s Nurses Act.

**Registered Nurse**

A person licensed to practice nursing under an Australian State/Territory or overseas country’s Nurses Act.

(Australian Nursing Council Inc 2002).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ABBREVIATIONS</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANC</td>
<td>Australian Nursing Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANCI</td>
<td>Australian Nursing Council Inc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANMC</td>
<td>Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASLPR</td>
<td>Australian Second Language Proficiency Rating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRNC</td>
<td>Board of Registered Nursing California</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAP</td>
<td>Collaborative Advisory Panel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNO</td>
<td>College of Nurses Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEST</td>
<td>Department of Education Science and Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIMIA</td>
<td>Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EN</td>
<td>Enrolled Nurse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IELTS</td>
<td>International English Language Testing System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICN</td>
<td>International Council of Nurses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISLPR</td>
<td>International Second Language Proficiency Rating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBACT</td>
<td>Nurses Board of the Australian Capital Territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBNT</td>
<td>Nurses Board of the Northern Territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBSA</td>
<td>Nurses Board of South Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBT</td>
<td>Nurses Board of Tasmania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBV</td>
<td>Nurses Board of Victoria</td>
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<tr>
<td>NBWA</td>
<td>Nurses Board of Western Australia</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCNZ</td>
<td>Nursing Council of New Zealand</td>
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<tr>
<td>NESB</td>
<td>Non English Speaking Background</td>
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<td>NLFR</td>
<td>Nursing Labour Force Report</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>NMBNSW</td>
<td>Nurses and Midwives Board of New South Wales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NMC</td>
<td>National Midwifery Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NMRA</td>
<td>Nurse and Midwife Regulatory Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOOSR</td>
<td>National Office Overseas Skills Recognition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRBNSW</td>
<td>Nurses Registration Board of New South Wales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OET</td>
<td>Occupational English Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBN</td>
<td>Philippine Board of Nursing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QNC</td>
<td>Queensland Nursing Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>RM</td>
<td>Registered Midwife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RN</td>
<td>Registered Nurse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SATAC</td>
<td>South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TER</td>
<td>Tertiary Entrance Rating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<td>USA</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
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PUBLICATIONS


PRESENTATIONS TO LEARNED SOCIETIES AND REVIEW GROUPS


Wickett, D 2004, The importance of using a framework to develop policy: The Nurses Board of South Australia experience. The 5th meeting of Regulatory Authorities from the Western Pacific and South East Asian Region and The 9th Joint Malaysian-Singapore Nursing Conference, Kuala Lumpur.

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