

University & TAFE Everything I Need To Know

Registered Nurses

NURSING REGISTRATION?

Upon graduation from University, you will be required to register as a nurse with the Queensland Nursing Council (QNC). As a regulatory body, the QNC oversees all aspects of nursing in Queensland from education and practice to nursing conduct. Once you are registered as a nurse you are required to renew your registration every year. If you have previously been registered as a nurse in Queensland, or you are licensed to practice as a nurse in another State or Territory or New Zealand, you must still re-register.

For more information on the QNC and to obtain registration forms, go to: <http://www.qnc.qld.gov.au>

University & TAFE Everything I Need To Know

Registered Nurses

HOW DO I APPLY FOR A JOB WHEN I GRADUATE?

Positions for new graduates in Queensland are available either with Queensland Health or private hospitals across the state. If you are a graduate wanting to work for Queensland Health you will need to apply via the Graduate Nurse Online Recruitment website - <http://www.health.qld.gov.au>, or alternatively by applying directly to Queensland private hospitals.

University & TAFE Everything I Need To Know

Registered Nurses

WHAT ARE SELECTION CRITERIA?

Generally when you apply for graduate nurse positions you will be required to address a number of key selection criteria related directly to the job you are applying for. The selection criteria cover a range of aspects important to the job. These include the skills, qualifications, aptitudes, abilities, experience and personal attributes necessary to perform the job you are applying for. Short-listing for interviews is generally based on how well your application addressed the selection criteria, so it is very important to clearly demonstrate how you are able to meet each criterion.

University & TAFE Everything I Need To Know

Registered Nurses

THE SELECTION INTERVIEW

The primary purpose of an interview is to provide the interviewer(s) with the opportunity to meet you and to determine your suitability for the position and work environment.

Although each hospital and health care facility has its own interviewing techniques, generally the interview questions may cover areas such as:

- a relevant clinical scenario;
- the role of a registered nurse in a multi-disciplinary team;
- how to undertake research or quality improvement activities;
- the scope of practice and professional standards as set down by the Queensland Nursing Council: <http://www.qnc.qld.gov.au>
- the nursing code of conduct, as set down by the Queensland Nursing Council: <http://www.qnc.qld.gov.au> and;
- workplace health and safety issues, specific to the setting in which you will work.

University & TAFE Everything I Need To Know

Registered Nurses

WHAT CAN I EXPECT DURING MY FIRST YEAR?

The transition from student to registered nurse can be challenging. Most hospitals provide some form of transition support to all new graduate nurses, ensuring that experienced nurses in the area where you'll be working will support you during the early stages of your nursing career, helping you become an effective member of the health care team. The structure of graduate transition support varies from hospital to hospital, so you should contact the hospital directly to find out specific information.

Queensland Health offers a Preceptorship Program to assist in the transition to work for graduate nurses. The Preceptorship Program is designed to provide you with the support you need to complete the transition from student to working as a registered nurse. This program involves being 'teamed' with an experienced nurse who can help you adjust to working life. The preceptor can help you with concerns or questions you may have with both clinical issues and operational procedures within the ward.

University & TAFE Everything I Need To Know

Registered Nurses

SHIFT WORK

Shift work is not always bad for your social life! While you may be required to work nights and weekends, you'll also be able to enjoy days off when the rest of the world is working, or sleep in after a big night out! You will also receive financial benefits for working shift work.

As a registered nurse, you may be required to work a rotating, seven-day shift roster. This means you will work day, afternoon and night shifts as well as weekends and public holidays.

You will also receive penalty payments for afternoon, night, weekend and public holiday shifts. An example of a typical nursing roster is as follows:

Example Rosters:

	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
R1	E	E	E	DO	DO	L	L	N	N	N	DO	DO	ADO	L
R2	L	L	E	E	DO	DO	L	L	L	E	E	E	DO	DO

Legend (as an example only)

R1 - Roster 1

R2 - Roster 2

E - Early shift - 7.00am - 3.30pm

L - Late shift - 3.00pm - 11.00pm

N - Night shift - 11.00pm - 7.00am

DO - Day off

ADO - Accrued day off

University & TAFE Everything I Need To Know

Registered Nurses

WHAT WILL I EARN?

In the Queensland public sector, the yearly base rate for a registered nurse, level 1 - year 2 (where a graduate starts) before shift loading, is \$34,433. If you work a roster that includes shift work, such as the one above, this figure could increase to more than \$40,000! At the top end of the Queensland public sector nursing award a nurses annual salary can be over \$95,000.

If you work shift work, on top of your base rate of pay, you're given the following shift loading:

- 12.5 per cent for Afternoon shifts
- 15 per cent for Night shifts
- 50 per cent for Saturdays
- 75 per cent for Sundays
- 150 per cent for Special Public Holidays - Easter Saturday, Labor Day and Show Day
- 50 per cent for all other Public Holidays

Nurses working shift work receive six weeks annual leave to compensate for working weekends and public holidays. Based on the example roster provided in the previous section Shift Work and including shift loadings, your fortnightly base pay would increase from \$1329.80 to:

- Roster 1 RN Grad \$1660.17 before tax each fortnight
- Roster 2 RN Grad \$1493.45 before tax each fortnight

University & TAFE Everything I Need To Know

Registered Nurses

WHEN CAN I SPECIALISE?

Most nursing graduates prefer to have at least a year's experience in general nursing before choosing to move into a specialty area. Many hospitals do however, offer graduate positions in a range of specialty areas.

There are a large number of specialist areas available for you to work in. We have listed a number of nursing specialties, which are by no means exhaustive! For more information, click on a specialty that interests you:

- Aged Care
- Cardiac
- Critical Care Nursing
- Day Surgery Nursing
- Drug and Alcohol
- Emergency
- Infectious Diseases
- Mental Health Nursing
- Midwifery
- Neonatal Nursing
- Neuroscience Nursing
- Nurse Academics
- Nurse Educator
- Nurse Manager
- Oncology
- Orthopaedics
- Paediatric and Child Health Nursing
- Perioperative
- Rehabilitation
- Remote Area
- Rural Nursing
- Sexual Health Nursing
- Transplant Nursing

University & TAFE Everything I Need To Know

Registered Nurses

WHAT CAN I STUDY THAT WILL GIVE ME CREDIT FOR FURTHER STUDY AT UNIVERSITY?

The following courses provide registered nurses with the opportunity to further their career in a specialty nursing area of their choice. Not all hospitals offer these specialties, so interested nurses should contact the hospital of their choice for more details.

Intensive Care

Hospital transition programs provide a two-subject credit towards the Graduate Certificate in Intensive Care Nursing at QUT, JCU, Griffith Uni, ACU and one subject at UCQ.

High Dependency

Hospital transition programs provide a two-subject credit towards the Graduate Certificate in Cardiac Nursing at JCU.

Neuroscience

Hospital transition programs provide a two-subject credit towards the Graduate Certificate in Clinical Nursing - Neuroscience, at Edith Cowan University.

Paediatric

Hospital transition programs provide a two-subject credit towards the Graduate Certificate in Child Youth Health at QUT (currently only available at the Royal Children's Hospital)

Neonatal

Hospital transition programs provide a two-subject credit towards the Graduate Diploma in Neonatal Nursing at JCU (currently only available at the Mater Public and Royal Women's Hospitals)

University & TAFE Everything I Need To Know

Registered Nurses

FURTHER EDUCATION

Once you have registered as a nurse, there are unlimited opportunities that exist within nursing to specialise and expand your career with further study. Graduate certificates, graduate diplomas, masters degrees and higher degrees by research are all available in a wide range of fields within nursing in Queensland.

University & TAFE Everything I Need To Know

Registered Nurses

GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Most Queensland universities offer scholarships to both undergraduate (studying your first degree) and post graduate nursing students. For more information on what scholarships and grants are available, you should contact the university directly.

Queensland Health offers 15 rural nursing scholarships to students at the end of their first year of university. The scholarships provide financial assistance of \$12,200 per year for the second and third years of university. Scholarship holders are then bonded to work for Queensland Health in a rural hospital for two years after they graduate.

For more information on the Queensland Health Rural Scholarship Scheme go to: <http://www.health.qld.gov.au/orh/scholarships/qhrss/rural.asp>

The Royal College of Nursing, Australia (RCNA) also offers a range of nursing scholarships. For more information on RCNA scholarships, go to: <http://www.rcna.org.au/site/scholarships.php>

Postgraduate Education Loans Scheme (PELS)

PELS is an interest-free loan provided by the Commonwealth Government. It is available to students enrolled in postgraduate, fee-paying, non-research courses. The Government pays the student's institution directly, and the loan is repaid via the taxation system when the student's income reaches \$23,242. For more information go to: <http://www.goingtouni.gov.au>