

# Special government policies

The NSW Government has special requirements and policies for students in both health-related and teacher education courses.

These requirements relate to:

- clinical/internship placements which must be undertaken as part of your course and
- procedures for employment after you have completed the course.

Policies in this area are subject to regular review.

**Note:** From 1 January 2009 there will be changes to the English and Mathematics requirements for teachers – see page 20 for details.

## Health-related courses

### Criminal record checks

The NSW Department of Health requires all students in health-related courses to undergo a criminal record check. The criminal record check must be completed before a student can attend any clinical placement in a Public Health facility.

Students must give their consent to the check by submitting a signed consent form as well as providing to the institution identification of themselves (via 100 point ID) through their institution. Consent forms are available from institutions and the checks are co-ordinated by the Department of Health. There may be a cost to the student and/or institution to conduct this check.

When the check is completed the student will be issued with a student Clinical Placement Authority through their institution. The original Authority must be produced whenever they attend a clinical placement and must not be photocopied or duplicated in any way. If it is damaged, lost or misplaced, or a student has an enquiry regarding the Clinical Placement Authority, they should contact their clinical co-ordinator. A Clinical Placement Authority may be replaced on application from the student and on payment of a fee. This information can be found at [www.health.nsw.gov.au/audit/students/index.html](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/audit/students/index.html).

If a check reveals offences it does not necessarily exclude a student from a clinical placement. Each circumstance is assessed in a confidential consultation between the student and a representative of the Department of Health.

Child Protection legislation also imposes a requirement to declare serious sexual offences. The institution will require a student to complete a Prohibited Employment Declaration prior to any clinical placement. A student shall sign the Declaration and return it to their institution which will retain it for its records. The Health Department does not issue or administer this Declaration.

### Infectious diseases

Students required to complete clinical training in the NSW hospital system will be subject to various guidelines and procedures laid down for health workers by the NSW Department of Health, including guidelines regarding infectious diseases.

In the hospital system you will be exposed to a large number and variety of individuals, and this may place you at risk of acquiring one of these diseases. In other cases, if you have a communicable disease you may place your clients at risk. Therefore, you are required to be protected against a range of vaccine-preventable infectious diseases and screened for tuberculosis.

Information about the specified infectious diseases and the requirements of the NSW Health policy can be found at [www.health.nsw.gov.au/ohs\\_vaccination/](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/ohs_vaccination/).

**If you do not have the required documentary evidence of protection against the specified diseases you will not be accepted for clinical placement in the NSW health system and your progress in the course will be affected.**

Some categories of health care workers – nurses, doctors, dentists, dental technicians, podiatrists and physiotherapists – also have regulated individual responsibility with regard to infection control. You should familiarise yourself with these responsibilities.

Health care workers who are either HIV antibody positive or Hepatitis B e-antigen or Hepatitis B DNA positive or Hepatitis C PCR positive must not perform exposure prone procedures. Expert medical advice should be obtained by infected people on their infectious status and the extent to which this may limit their clinical practice.

## Teacher education courses

### Working with children check

The NSW Government is committed to providing a safe and caring environment for children. Under the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998* and the *Commission for Children and Young People Amendment Act 2005*, employers are required to implement what is referred to as the Working with Children Check. These Acts also establish employment screening requirements for child-related employment in NSW.

All teacher education students must complete a Prohibited Employment Declaration before commencing their initial practicum or internship placement in a NSW school. In signing the Declaration a student is declaring that they have not been convicted of any prohibited or registrable offence that would preclude them from working in child-related employment in NSW.

Teacher education students will be unable to undertake practical course requirements in NSW schools if they are prohibited persons.

It is an offence for a prohibited person to apply for, remain in or undertake child-related employment. It is also an offence to make a false declaration.

In addition, a national criminal records check is undertaken once the student completes a Consent to Employment Screening and involves:

- a Working with Children Check
- an Australia-wide check for relevant criminal records
- a check for relevant apprehended violence orders and
- a check of relevant employment proceedings.

A national criminal records check is required before a student teacher or associate teacher is approved to commence an internship placement. This check assists organisations to select suitable staff to work with children.

For further details contact the course co-ordinator/s at the institutions.

### English and Mathematics requirements for teachers\*

*\*new requirements as advised by the NSW Institute of Teachers  
– effective 1 January 2009*

#### Primary teachers in NSW schools

Teacher education students seeking employment as primary teachers in NSW schools must have achieved a Higher School Certificate minimum Band 4 in English Advanced, Standard English or English as a Second Language, and Band 4 in General Mathematics, or completion of Mathematics or Extension Mathematics to an equivalent standard.

Where you do not meet these entry requirements, a tertiary institution may offer concurrent study or appropriate bridging units and/or require satisfactory performance in approved tests in literacy and numeracy before graduation.

For further details contact the course co-ordinator/s at the institutions and read institutions' course descriptions in Part 2.

#### Secondary teachers in NSW schools

Teacher education students seeking employment as secondary teachers in NSW schools must have achieved a Higher School Certificate minimum Band 4 in English Advanced, Standard English or English as a Second Language.

Where you do not meet these entry requirements, a tertiary institution may offer concurrent study or appropriate bridging units and/or require satisfactory performance in an approved test in literacy before graduation.

For further details contact the course coordinator/s at the institutions and read institutions' course descriptions in Part 2.

### NSW Institute of Teachers – new scheme teachers

Teachers who were first employed to teach in a NSW school after 1 October 2004, or who have returned to teaching in a NSW school after an absence of five years or more, are defined as new scheme teachers by the *Institute of Teachers Act 2004*. In order to be employed as a teacher in NSW, new scheme teachers must meet the accreditation requirements of the NSW Institute of Teachers, including payment of an annual fee. Information on the NSW Institute of Teachers is available at [www.nswteachers.nsw.edu.au](http://www.nswteachers.nsw.edu.au) or 1300 739 338.