

November 2020 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Accreditation Committee meeting

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Accreditation Committee (the Committee) undertakes accreditation functions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practice in the national scheme regulating health practitioners.

The Communique provides information about the Committee's recent activities. The Committee publishes this communiqué on the Committee's [accreditation webpage](#). Please forward it to your colleagues and employees who may be interested.

Committee's response to COVID-19

The Committee and Ahpra continue to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic and its potential impacts on accredited and approved programs. The Committee has released statements outlining its plans for its accreditation activities for the remainder of 2020 and into 2021, on the '[News and updates](#)' accreditation webpage. The Committee is currently undertaking special COVID-19 monitoring of all accredited and approved programs.

Accreditation Committee meetings

The 38th meeting of the Committee was held on 10 November 2020 via videoconference. It was the Committee's last scheduled meeting for 2020..

Some activities that were discussed at the Committee's November 2020 meeting are outlined below.

Accreditation standards for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practice – transition from the 2013 to 2019 accreditation standards

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Board of Australia (the Board) approved the [Accreditation standards: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practice 2019](#) (2019 accreditation standards), and the new [Professional capabilities for registered Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioners](#), at its February 2019 meeting, with an effective date of 1 June 2020.

The Committee is responsible for implementing the approved 2019 accreditation standards through monitoring and assessment of currently accredited programs and the education providers that offer those programs. In May 2020, the Committee [revised its accreditation activities](#) due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Education providers were advised about the revised accreditation activities through correspondence sent in June 2020.

At the November meeting the Committee discussed an updated approach to assessment and monitoring of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practice programs in 2021, including the implementation of a 'COVID-responsive' approach with a focus on the core regulatory purpose of ensuring each program continues to provide students with learning that ensures they achieve the professional capabilities for safe and competent practice in Australia prior to graduation. The Committee has communicated to each relevant education provider their respective requirements for transitioning to accreditation against the 2019 accreditation standards, including tentative full accreditation assessment dates against the 2019 accreditation standards.

The Committee's 'COVID-19 responsive' assessment activities against the 2019 accreditation standards commence from 2021 .

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Accreditation Committee
Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency
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Monitoring approved programs of study

At the November meeting, the Committee considered a monitoring response from one education provider, and met with representatives of the education provider via videoconference to discuss the delivery of their program.

COVID-19 monitoring

The Committee recently concluded its 2020 special COVID-19 monitoring of all accredited and approved programs of study. The Committee has considered monitoring responses from all relevant education providers, and provided advice to the Board. The Committee will continue its monitoring of approved programs on the downstream impacts of COVID-19 and is designing its framework for routine annual monitoring in 2021, which will include a range of reporting requirements for education providers on the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 on their programs and students.

Stakeholder engagement

At the November meeting the Committee noted the Skills IQ consultation on the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Health Worker Training Package Products, including the HLT40213 Certificate IV in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care Practice. The Committee is considering submitting a response to the consultation.

The Program Accreditation Team, on behalf of the Committee, continues to engage with education providers via the Committee's [accreditation webpages](#); through correspondence via email and phone contact, and communiques.

Guidelines for accreditation of education and training programs (revised accreditation process)

As noted in the Committee's September communique, the [Guidelines for accreditation of education and training programs](#) are now available. This is an important document for all education providers to familiarise themselves with ahead of upcoming assessments against the 2019 accreditation standards.

Contact information

For any queries related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practice program accreditation, please contact the Program Accreditation Team via email at program.accreditation@ahpra.gov.au.

For more information on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice accreditation please visit the Committee's [accreditation webpages](#).

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Ahpra and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Accreditation Committee work in partnership to accredit education and training programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practice.