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MANUAL FOR COLLEGE ACCREDITATION

Version	Review Date	Remarks of Changes
V1 (1 st issue)	01-08-2015	
V2	01-07-2020	Periodic update
V3	01-05-2021	Adoption of new fellowship pathway

IMPORTANT NOTICE

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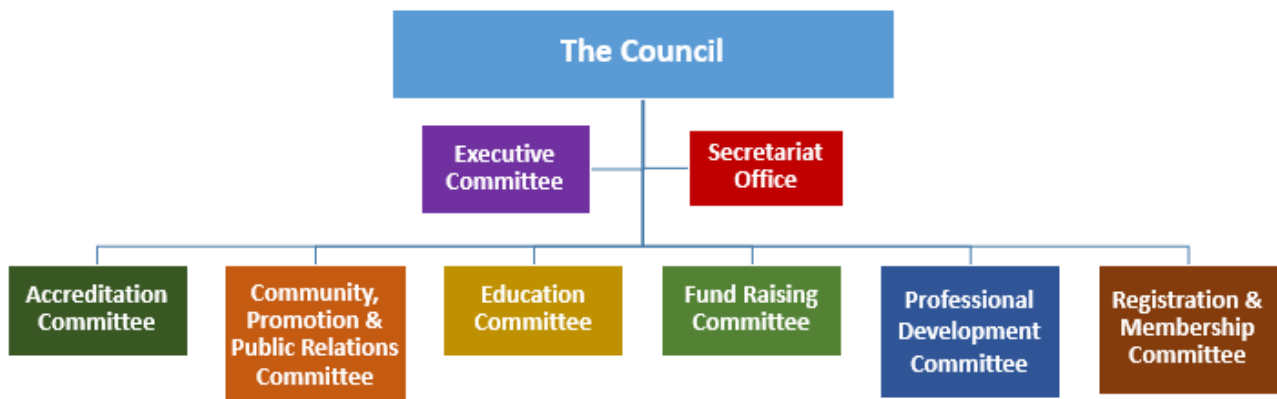
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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Hong Kong Academy of Nursing (HKAN) is an independent institution responsible for the regulation of advanced nursing practice in Hong Kong. It aims at safeguarding the public to receive safe and quality health care services. The HKAN will ensure the Academy Colleges have attained the required standards when granting Members/Fellow Members practicing a nursing specialty at advanced level.
2. Advanced practice nurse (APN) is an umbrella term to describe nurses practising at an advanced level. Advanced nursing practice involves the emergence of new horizons of clinical nursing practice and expertise that go beyond basic nursing care and activities in meeting the health needs of individuals, families, groups and communities across the health wellness-illness continuum. APNs at a higher level of practice analyze and synthesize knowledge, master complex situations, interpret and apply evidence-based practice and research findings, and advance nursing standards and the profession as a whole. APNs assume collegial relationships in an interdisciplinary team and play a leading role in their area of expertise. These attributes are achieved at a higher educational level interacting with substantial years of nursing experience transiting from proficient to expert level. Incorporating professional leadership, education and research through continued professional development, APNs demonstrate clinical reasoning, judgment, and skills at a higher-level capacity. (Note 1)


(Note 1: HKAN, 2018, Position paper. Advanced Practice Nurse)

3. Organizational Structure of The Hong Kong Academy of Nursing



II. ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE

4. Following the incorporation of The Provisional Hong Kong Academy of Nursing Limited on 6 October 2011, the Accreditation Committee was set up at the same time with the following terms of reference:
 - To set, monitor and enforce the standards of Academy Colleges;
 - To recommend to the HKAN Council the criteria for the accreditation of professional

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organizations to be Academy Colleges;

- To recommend to the HKAN Council the procedures, documentations and fees payable for accreditation of Academy Colleges;
- To conduct accreditation processes for Academy Colleges and make recommendations to the HKAN Council;
- To keep under review the existing policy and process of accreditation, and to make recommendations to the HKAN Council for improvement when necessary.

5. To achieve this, a set of criteria and procedures have been compiled by the HKAN to review, evaluate and confirm the essential requirements required for Academy Colleges. Nursing specialty Colleges are required to provide evidence to the Accreditation Committee for assessment. The Colleges have to satisfy the standards stipulated by the HKAN.
6. Manual for College Accreditation has been developed to accredit Academy Colleges with a standard procedure. Upon approval of the HKAN Council, accredited Colleges are recognized to be Institutional Members of the HKAN. Since 2012, a total of 14 Academy Colleges have been accredited and it gives them the right to propose College members for the HKAN to granting Ordinary Members and Fellow Members of the Academy.

III. ACADEMY COLLEGES

7. Academy Colleges are registered organizations under the Hong Kong Laws to provide certification of individuals as advanced practice nurses (APNs) in specialties recognized by the HKAN. Certified individuals will be granted a title that reflects the specialty and their scope of practice will be governed by the concerned Academy College. Through regulation of advanced practice in the recognized specialty areas, the HKAN and Academy Colleges are held accountable to protect the public by assuring that all Ordinary Members and Fellow Members meet required standards of an APN.
8. Each Academy College will set its standards of specialist training, including level, duration, content, methods of assessment, and criteria for certification of membership based on the competence framework of HKAN for advanced practice nurses (appendix 1) and the HKAN Manual for Program Planning and Examination (Appendix 2).
 9. Academy Colleges will set standards to assess the competence of a nurse to achieve the specialty competence. The assessment will consist of written examinations and clinical assessment. The nurse must pass all prescribed assessments before he/she is given the title of Ordinary Member and Fellow Member.

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IV. ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

10. The Accreditation Committee of the HKAN is responsible to assess application of Academy College. An applying specialty college has to submit an application form to the HKAN together with the supporting documents. The following notes serve as a reference guide to complete the application form:

10.1. Governance and Administration

10.1.1 The governing body, e.g. College Council, is responsible to carry out the main functions and formulate policies and strategies for the development of its nursing specialty. The mission and objectives of the college are to provide the community with the specialty nurses of the professional standard and conduct. Members of the governing body (council) include leaders within the areas of specialization and key stakeholders.

10.1.2 Information required for this section:

- Mission statement and objectives of the College;
- Membership and Terms of Reference of the governing body (council) including the committee structure;
- Curriculum vitae for all members of the governing body (council);
- Document, e.g. annual reports, minutes of Council Meetings, showing the college is providing activities in preparing specialty nurse, establishing specialty standards and regulation of specialty practices;
- Record system e.g. membership, training records, continuous professional education records.

10.2. Organizational Structure and Decision-making


10.2.1 There is a clear organizational structure showing the main functions of the college, e.g. education, registration, accreditation, professional development and discipline, are carried out by committees and sub-committees.

10.2.2 Information required for this section:

- An organization chart showing the organizational structure;
- Membership, terms of reference of committees and advisory body;
- Curriculum vitae of committee chairs, course leaders, / examiners;
- Document showing the activities of the college is achieving its functions, e.g. committee minutes

10.3. Program Planning, Development and Design

10.3.1 Under the direction of the governing body, there is a committee structure for the design, implementation and evaluation of all advanced practice certification programs.

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10.3.2 The education preparation of a specialty nurse has to fulfill the minimum requirement for the advanced practice certification program required by the HKAN. It includes 500 hours of theoretical input and 500 hours of guided clinical practice over a period of 4 years. The 500 theoretical hours can come from the accredited courses organized by accredited providers with at least 60% structured courses offered at the post-graduate level and the remaining not more than 40% structured courses provided by specialty course providers.

10.3.3 The advanced practice certification program is consisted of three major components including the generic core, advanced practice core and specialty core (page 7 of “HKAN Manual for Program Planning and Examination”). The curriculum must have the theory and clinical components in order to meet the core competencies of a specialty nurse stipulated by the college.

10.3.4 Totally 500 hours of the guided clinical practice (250 hours by a mentor recognized by the related Academy College and additional 250 by a fellow) should be accomplished in accredited training site(s). Please refer to paragraph 10.6 of this section for the accreditation of training sites.

10.3.5 The College has a system to require mentees to keep their training records, e.g. experimental training, learning contract between the mentee and the mentor. Suggested topics of training record (logbook) are listed on page 8 of “HKAN Manual for Program Planning and Examination”.

10.3.6 Information required for this section:

- Committee structure responsible for the development of education programs;
- Terms of reference and membership of committee(s);
- Syllabus and/or curriculum and of the advanced practice certification program;
- Admission criteria to Member and Fellow Member examinations;
- List of training sites, if available; and
- Sample of training record.


10.4. College Examination and Certification Policy

10.4.1 The college has an annual plan for the certification examination, e.g. enrolment, examination, announcement of results, appeal.

10.4.2 The college has a policy for accepting candidates sitting the certification examination:

Before a candidate is allowed to sit for the certification examination, he/she must:

- i. obtain a master’s or higher degree in nursing OR health-care related discipline after RN/RM registration;
- ii. produce a training record including the clinical training to show that he/she has completed all the educational requirements of the specialty;
- iii. accumulate the required years of experience in the related specialty as stipulated by the academy college.

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10.4.3 The college has a quality assurance system to ensure the quality of assessment, e.g. Examination Committee, procedure should be in place to ensure content validity (knowledge base of a specialist), construct validity (design of the question) and reliability of the questions, adopted valid and reliable assessment methods in assessing the competence of candidates, e.g. use of objective-typed questions, professional portfolio, viva or other appropriate means, external examiners, local and overseas expert advisors, appeal mechanisms.

10.4.4 The college has a system to ensure strict confidence of the assessment process. Should there be any fraud or leakage, there are remedial measures to rectify the issue and prevent future occurrence.

10.4.5 The college has a policy to award the mentees, e.g. an explicit grading for High distinction, Distinction, Credit, Pass and Fail, dates of announcement of results is not more than 2 months after the examination, certification should only be granted after all the formalities are completed and the certification will be issued directly by Academy College. The examination process and grading is listed in page 23 of “HKAN Manual for Program Planning & Examination”.

10.4.6 Information required for this section:

- Committee structure responsible for the examination and certification;
- Terms of reference and membership of committee(s);
- Types and length of examination, admission criteria, grading of examination results;
- Process of setting examination questions and the approval process;
- Appeal procedure, and
- Sample certificates.

10.5. Recognized Education Programs and Teaching Faculties


10.5.1 The college has a mechanism to recognize training programs relevant to the clinical specialty concerned, e.g. profile of the teaching institutes, faculty staff, and relevance of curriculum and education materials.

10.5.2 Information required for this section:

- Membership and Terms of Reference of the Assessment Panel;
- Policy to recognize training programs conducted by a third party;
- List of recognized training programs; and
- List of recognized training institutes, if available.

10.6. Accreditation of Training Sites and Mentors

10.6.1 The college has standards to accredit training sites and mentors. The standards are geared towards the integration of theory into practice, and ensuring mentees can acquire the specialty competence in the placement. The college has to

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ensure the standard of practice, reasonable case load and availability of clinical mentors when the mentees are placed in the training site.

10.6.2 The college has a system to accredit the training sites, e.g. A committee structure (such as Accreditation Committee) to determine the standards of a training site and the qualification of mentors endorsed by the college, mechanism to reciprocal recognition of training sites, accreditation and process criteria. A sample of accreditation criteria for training site is included in Appendix 3.

10.6.3 The college has established standards in clinical teaching, including the minimum qualification and, number of Fellow Members to mentees. A list of qualified Fellow Members should be maintained for each training site. Each mentee should be designated with a mentor who will conduct clinical assessment and to sign the logbook as required.

10.6.4 Information required for this section:

- Profile of clinical training sites; and
- List of Fellow Members

10.7. Program Evaluation and Quality Assurance


10.7.1 The college has stipulated policies and procedures to monitor the quality and effectiveness of training programs and operations. The policies and procedures are available to all mentees. There is an internal mechanism to ensure the standards are maintained; such as accreditation, validation and audit, external reviewers or expert panelists.

10.7.2 The college has a system to evaluate the specialty education programs regularly. Views will be collected from users and other stakeholders. The benchmark of the evaluation is made against local and international standards. The governing body of the college is responsible for the process, outcomes, as well as quality improvement measures of each training program.

10.7.3 The college has to ensure the communication system among the college; education providers (if any), clinical training facilities, mentees and mentors are open and effective. Both formal and informal channels will be accepted as part and partial of the quality assurance process.

10.7.4 Information required for this section:

- Committee structure for the approval, validation and re-validation, and monitoring of training programs;
- Terms of reference of any external bodies or advisory committee;
- Program evaluation report; and
- Meeting minutes with clinical departments, mentees and mentors.

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10.8. College Management Report (after initial year)

10.8.1 Each Academy College shall submit a plan and report to the HKAN biennially including the organizational structure of college, terms of reference of committees, number of ordinary members and fellow members, examinations held, summary of achievements of mentees, program audits, and improvement plan.

10.8.2 Information required for this section:

- Biennial plan and report

V. THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

11. Submission of Application Form

11.1 The specialty college has to apply to the HKAN Council to become an Academy College. The HKAN requires all applying colleges to submit the completed application form together with a self-study report. The college has to ensure the information contained in the application form and self-study report is current and accurate.

11.2 The college has to include the following information in the self-study report:

- Short description of the Academy College;
- Governance structure and administration;
- Organizational structure and decision making;
- Program planning, development and design;
- College examination and certification policy;
- Recognized education programs and teaching faculties;
- Accreditation of training sites and mentors; and
- Program evaluation and quality assurance


12. Becoming an Academy College

12.1 The Accreditation Committee of HKAN will assess the Application against the criteria.

12.2 The Accreditation Committee of HKAN will form an Accreditation Panel within one month upon receiving the application to assess the eligibility of the college to become an Academy College. The Panel shall consist of at least one from respectable leaders of the specialty, one from an academic field to assess the application.

13. Outcomes of Accreditation

13.1 The Accreditation Panel shall furnish a report to the Accreditation Committee within two months for deliberation.

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13.2 The Accreditation Committee will report to the HKAN Council on the recommendations of accreditation. The HKAN Council shall decide whether to grant Academy College to the college.

13.3 The HKAN Council may decide outcomes of the accreditation:

- Accreditation for a period of 5 years;
- Provisional accreditation for a period of not more than 24 months, subject to compliance with such condition or requirement as stipulated by the HKAN;
- Rejection of the application

13.4 For all rejected applications, the same application would not be processed within the next 6 months.

14. Appeal against the Result of Application for Institutional Member

14.1 The HKAN has an appeal mechanism for all applications. The college has to file an appeal to the HKAN Council within one month from the announcement of results of accreditation. All appeals shall be made in writing together with all necessary documents to support the appeal against the result of application.


14.2 Upon receipt of an appeal, the President of HKAN will appoint an Appeal Panel within one month of receiving the application to review the application. The Panel will consist of at least one external expert together with two HKAN Council Members who have not involved in the accreditation process of this college. The Appeal Panel shall study the submissions made by the appealing applicant and review the accreditation process and any relevant documents.

14.3 The Appeal Panel shall report the recommendations to the HKAN Council within one month. The HKAN Council will then consider the Appeal Panel's recommendation and may affirm, vary or discharge the appeal and such decision made by the HKAN Council will be final. HKAN will inform the college of its decision 5 months from the date of submission of appeal.

VI. RE-ACCREDITATION OF ACADEMY COLLEGE

15. The Academy Colleges are invited to apply for re-accreditation 6 months before the last date of validity period. The Academy College would submit the completed application form on or before the specified date. The college has to ensure the information contained in the application is current and accurate.

16. The Accreditation Committee will review the application and appoint Assessment Team to assess the reaccreditation application. The Accreditation Committee will report to the HKAN Council on the recommendation of reassessment. The HKAN Council shall decide the followings:


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- Accreditation of the Academy College for a period of 5 years
- Reject the application

17. When there is no response from the Academy College, the Academy College will be reminded again to apply for re-accreditation 3 months before the last date of validity period.
18. If still no response, the Chair of Accreditation Committee will bring forth the case to the HKAN for consideration.
19. Any appeal will be handled according to the mechanism set out in paragraph 14.


VII. NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES

20. Academy Colleges are required to inform the HKAN for any material change in the College, such as the change in:
 - Education program;
 - Title and award;
 - Admission criteria and policy
 - Change of criteria for accreditation training sites
 - Change of criteria for accrediting education programs provided by external training institutes.
21. Supporting document in respect of the changes of the Academy College(s) should be submitted to HKAN within two months of the effective change. The HKAN will then channel the changes to respective committee(s) such as Accreditation Committee, Education Committee or Registration & Membership Committee to consider whether any further action should be taken and the Academy College will be informed in writing accordingly within 3 months from the date of receiving the information from the Academy College(s).

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Appendix 1

Hong Kong Academy of Nursing Competence Statements for Advanced Practicing Nurses


Key domains of the competence framework for advanced practice nurses

- Domain 1** Managing clients with complex health conditions
- Domain 2** Enhancing therapeutic nurse-client relationship
- Domain 3** Demonstrating effective leadership and team work
- Domain 4** Enhancing quality assurance and improvement
- Domain 5** Managing and negotiating innovative and effective approaches to care delivery
- Domain 6** Enhancing professional attributes of general and advanced practice
- Domain 7** Enhancing personal attributes

Note: APN role is developmental, that is, there is a process for the APNs to mature in their role. The highlighted statements are expected of all entry APNs but over time, all the competence statements are expected of the advanced practicing nurses (APNs).

Domain 1 Managing clients with complex health conditions

1. Manages complete episode of care for complicated health cases and refers aspects of care to own and other professions.
2. Provides case management services to meet multiple client health care needs.
3. Plans and implements diagnostic strategies and therapeutic interventions to help clients with unstable and complex health care problems regain stability and restore health in collaboration with the client and multidisciplinary health care team.
4. Rapidly assesses client's unstable and complex health care problems through synthesis and prioritization of historically and immediately derived data.
5. Selects, may perform, and interprets common screening and diagnostic laboratory tests.
6. Diagnoses and manages acute and chronic diseases while attending to the illness experience.
7. Diagnoses unstable and complex health care problems utilizing collaboration and consultation with the multidisciplinary health care team as indicated by setting, specialty, and individual knowledge and experience.
8. Reviews medication regime and counsels clients concerning drug regimens, drug side effects, and interactions.
9. Assesses and adjusts plans for continuous management of client's health status by monitoring variation in wellness and illness.
10. Obtains specialist and referral care for clients while remaining the primary care provider.
11. Monitors client data base for follow-up, consultation, referral, and outcomes.

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Domain 2 Enhancing therapeutic nurse-client relationship

12. Demonstrates skills in promoting therapeutic interaction to effect clients' change in health behavior.
13. Provides guidance and counseling regarding symptom management.
14. Provides emotional and informational support to clients and their families.
15. Uses human skills to enhance effectiveness of relationship.
16. Applies principles of self-efficacy/empowerment in promoting behavior change.
17. Monitors and reflects own emotional response to client interaction and uses as data to further therapeutic interaction.
18. Facilitates staff to debrief on overwhelming emotion and grief associated with nurse-client relationship.
19. Communicates a sense of "being present" with the client.


Domain 3 Demonstrating effective leadership and team work

20. Coordinates human and environmental resources necessary to manage rapidly changing situations.
21. Leads hospital/community health education and promotional activities.
22. Empowers staff to assume increasing responsibilities for complicated client care with delegation, support and supervision.
23. Provides leadership in the interdisciplinary team through the development of collaborative practices or innovative partnerships.
24. Demonstrate effective leadership skills and be able to exert influence in a group.
25. Provides leadership in professional activities.

Domain 4 Enhancing quality assurance and improvement

26. Leads the on-going process of setting and revising guidelines, protocols, standards and contingency plan.
27. Develops a tracking system within the practice to ensure that clients receive appropriate preventive services.
28. Monitors peers, self and delivery system through Quality Assurance, Total Quality Management, as part of Continuous Quality Improvement.
29. Manages complaints and monitors malpractice.
30. Benchmarks various care programs with outcome measures and advises on clinical management or recommends review of intervention as indicated.
31. Initiates and implements quality improvement strategies and clinical audits in collaboration with various health disciplines.

Domain 5 Managing and negotiating innovative and effective approaches to care delivery

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32. Employs appropriate diagnostic and therapeutic interventions and regimens for specific client groups with attention to safety, cost, acceptability, efficacy and cost-effectiveness.
33. Suggests implementation of evidenced-based practice and facilitates changes.
34. Uses evidence and rationale to leverage senior and other on decision making.
35. Contributes to the development of overall client care delivery system and adopts appropriate nursing models in system to achieve optimal outcomes.
36. Re-engineers the work process.
37. Establishes detailed implementation schedules, resources planning, achievement indicators, and monitoring mechanisms to support the service development plan.
38. Envisions change impacts. Is prepared to take reasonable risk to facilitate change and open to innovations.

Domain 6 Enhancing professional attributes of general and advanced practice

39. Applies principles of epidemiology and demography in clinical practice.
40. Promotes and fosters ethical practice and advocacy for clients.
41. Applies/develops a theory-based conceptual framework to guide practice.
42. Attains self-advancement professionally through initiating and being involved in evidence based practice and research activities.
43. Masters the application of advanced health care technology in specific areas and shows knowledge of the evidence found.
44. Critically evaluates and applies research studies pertinent to client care management and outcomes.
45. Applies/conducts research studies pertinent to primary care and/or specialty practice management.
46. Demonstrates expertise in area(s) of nursing. As a resource person for referrals in these areas.
47. Interprets own professional strengths, role, and scope of ability to peers, clients and colleagues.
48. Acts as a role model and sets exemplary standard of professional behaviours.
49. Supports socialization, education, and training of novice practitioners by serving as a preceptor, role model and mentor.
50. Motivates and supports staff to be self-developing and to achieve higher professional goals.
51. Interprets and markets the advanced practicing nurse role to the public and other health care professionals.
52. Participates in legislative and policy-making activities which influence advanced nursing practice and health services.

Domain 7 Enhancing personal attributes


53. Analyzes situations critically and draws relationships among issues.
54. Maintains active membership in professional organization.

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Appendix 2

HKAN Manual for Program Planning and Examination

(Please download the updated version from <http://hkan.hk>)

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Appendix 3

Accreditation Criteria for Training Site

Purpose

1. To facilitate approval of training programs
2. To ensure the standards of practice of training site
3. To determine the sufficiency of clinical experience
4. To provide public confidence in training site

Essential Elements for Accreditation

1. Clinical Establishment
 - Facilities of the clinical service; such as number of wards and beds, clinic sessions and centres
2. Staff Establishment
 - Nursing staff; the number for each rank
 - Availability of fellow members
 - Medical and other disciplines
3. Workload Statistics
 - Case load for the specialty / subspecialty, average bed occupancy
4. Service Provision
 - Specialty services; acute, sub-acute, extended and home care, including nurse-led service
5. Professional Development
 - CNE and PEM system
 - Recognized or accredited training site for nursing education programs
 - Availability of in-service or structured specialty training for staff
6. Resources
 - Availability of specialty mentors - number and years of experience
 - Learning resources - clinical guidelines and protocols, clinical learning objective or log book

The Academy Colleges are required to lay out the accreditation criteria of training sites in accordance to the specialty characteristic.