

Course Descriptor

Professional Boundaries and the NMBA Codes of Conduct · OBA-PBC-2026

DOCUMENT CONTROL

- Programme: Professional Boundaries and the NMBA Codes of Conduct (OBA-PBC-2026)
- Audience: Student and Facilitator · public-facing
- Version 1.0 | Issued 19/09/2026 | Review due 19/09/2027
- Provider: OBA Nursing Academy

Professional Boundaries and the NMBA Codes of Conduct

A fully self-directed, entirely online professional development programme for registered and enrolled nurses, nurse practitioners, midwives, students, and the managers and educators who supervise them. 8.5 CPD hours.

TWO THINGS TO SETTLE BEFORE YOU ENROL

- THIS IS NOT TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE. OBA's Trauma-Informed Care: Practice, Not Therapy is about how ordinary care is delivered so that it does not re-traumatise. The two courses share one idea - the power imbalance - and use it for different purposes.
- AND THIS IS NOT LEGAL ADVICE. It contains no prediction of what a regulator, a tribunal or an employer would decide, and no named practitioner or real case anywhere in it. Advice about your own situation comes from your indemnity insurer, your union or professional association, and a lawyer - in that order, and early rather than late.

Course code	OBA-PBC-2026
Provider	OBA Nursing Academy
Duration	8.5 CPD hours, self-paced
Delivery	Entirely online, self-directed, through the OBA learning management system
Modules	11, plus a case study assessment and a summative assessment
Assessment	60 single-best-answer items, 80% pass mark, 2 attempts
Entry requirements	None. Written for registered and enrolled nurses and midwives in every setting
Content note	No named practitioner, no real case and no identifiable notification anywhere
What it is not	Not legal advice. It predicts no outcome and clears nothing
Outcome	Certificate of completion with a unique certificate

	identifier
Version	1.0, issued 19/09/2026, review due 19/09/2027

Who should enrol

- Registered nurses, enrolled nurses and nurse practitioners in every setting - the code applies to all of them, in all contexts, whether the work is paid or unpaid and clinical or not
- Midwives, who have their own code in identical structure - this programme names the differences rather than assuming them
- Nurses working in small, rural, regional and remote communities, where the person in the bed is also the person at the shop and a pre-existing relationship is not avoidable but must be managed
- Aged care and disability nurses and care staff, where relationships run for years, families become close, and gifts and bequests are offered sincerely
- Mental health, AOD and forensic nurses, where boundaries are explicit clinical work rather than background conduct
- Nurse unit managers, educators and clinical leads, who hold the other half of this subject - responding to a disclosed over-involvement, and deciding what is a performance matter and what is a notification
- Students of nursing and new graduates, for whom the code is the document they will be measured against and the one they have most often never read
- Internationally qualified nurses, for whom the National Scheme, the notification system and the Australian expectations around social media and gifts are frequently entirely new

What you will cover

Module	Title	Hours
00	Orientation: What the Codes Are, and What They Are Not	0.50
01	The Shape of the Code: Four Domains, Seven Principles	0.50
02	The Professional Relationship and the Power Imbalance	0.50
03	Crossings, Violations and the Drift Between Them	0.50
04	Over-involvement, Under-involvement and the Signs	0.50
05	Gifts, Money and the Things That Look Like Kindness	0.50
06	Social Media and the Boundary You Cannot See	0.50
07	Privacy, Confidentiality and Who May Look	0.50
08	Sexual Misconduct: the Line With No Exceptions	0.50
09	Colleagues: Bullying, Harassment and the Other	0.50

	Boundary	
10	Notifications and What Reasonable Belief Means	0.50

How you will learn

1. Watch the narrated module video.
2. Read the Student Learner Guide for that module.
3. Complete the reflective workbook activity.
4. Complete the knowledge check and read the rationales.
5. Move to the next module when the system unlocks it.

The ten questions you will finish with

This course deliberately does not answer the questions that are set where you work. It tells you which they are, and the workbook has a page for the actual answers.

- Have I ever read the Code of conduct for nurses end to end - and where is my copy of it?
- What is my employer's gifts policy, and where are gifts recorded?
- What is my employer's social media policy, and does it say anything about personal accounts?
- Who would I actually tell if I realised I had become over-involved with somebody - by name?
- What is my professional indemnity insurer's number, and am I covered through my employer, my association, or both?

...and five more, in Module 00.

A note on the content

SOME OF THE PEOPLE TAKING THIS COURSE HAVE HAD A NOTIFICATION MADE ABOUT THEM. Some are in a process now, some have been directed here after one, and some are carrying something they have never told anybody about.

That shapes how the programme is written. It carries no named practitioner and no real case, because a boundaries course built out of other people's tribunal decisions teaches learners to watch their colleagues rather than examine their own practice. It makes no prediction about what would happen to anybody, because nobody teaching a course can know that.

And it says plainly, more than once, that the great majority of boundary problems begin as kindness - not as predation. The nurse who stays late, gives out a personal number, accepts a gift, or becomes the only person a lonely resident talks to, is usually somebody doing their best in conditions nobody designed. Naming that is not an excuse for it. It is the only framing under which people recognise themselves in time.

Every module carries the support lines. You may stop at any point and come back; nothing is timed and there is no penalty. If this subject is heavier than you expected, that is information about what the subject carries rather than about you.

SUPPORT - FOR YOU, NOT FOR A PATIENT

- Nurse & Midwife Support - 1800 667 877. 24 hours, seven days. Free and confidential, for nurses, midwives and students - including about a notification, and including when the thing you need to talk

about is your own conduct. The 2020 mandatory notification thresholds were redesigned specifically so that seeking help is safe.

- Lifeline - 13 11 14. 24 hours, seven days. National crisis support.
- Your professional indemnity insurer, and your union or professional association - the number on your policy. Free advice you have already paid for, available before anything is decided. Find the number before you need it - it is one of the ten local questions in Module 00.
- You may stop this programme at any point and come back. Nothing is timed and there is no penalty.

What this course is, and is not

SCOPE OF PRACTICE AND CURRENCY

- This programme is professional development. It is not legal advice, it is not advice about any particular notification, complaint, employment matter or relationship, and it does not predict what a regulator, a tribunal or an employer would decide in any case - every notification is assessed on its own merits. It does not name any practitioner or reproduce any real case. Where you need advice about your own situation, contact your professional indemnity insurer, your union or professional association, or a lawyer, and do it early. The NMBA codes, the National Law and your employer's policies are the authorities; where any of them differs from anything in this course, they apply.
- Sources and their versions, retrieved 19/09/2026. Conduct: NMBA Code of conduct for nurses, EFFECTIVE 1 MARCH 2018, UPDATED MARCH 2026, next review due June 2027 - seven principles across four domains. The Code of conduct for midwives is the parallel document. Ethics: the ICN Code of Ethics for Nurses, in effect in Australia from 1 March 2018, jointly adopted by the NMBA, ACN, ACM and ANMF. Social media: Ahpra and National Boards, Social media: How to meet your obligations under the National Law. Notifications: Guidelines: Mandatory notifications about registered health practitioners, March 2020. Advertising: Guidelines for advertising a regulated health service, and section 133 of the National Law.

CURRENCY WARNING CARRIED IN MODULE 00: 'A nurse's guide to professional boundaries' (February 2010) is RETIRED. It was superseded when the Code of conduct took effect on 1 March 2018, and it is not on the NMBA's current professional standards list - but it still circulates in induction packs and search results. The operative instrument is Principle 4.1 of the code.

NOT stated in this course, because they belong to a lawyer, a regulator or your workplace: any prediction of a regulatory or tribunal outcome; any named practitioner or real case; any advice on responding to a notification beyond who to ring; your state's mandatory reporting thresholds for child protection and elder abuse; your employer's gift, social media and conflict of interest policies; and the co-regulatory processes of New South Wales and Queensland beyond naming the bodies.