

SESLHD POLICY COVER SHEET



Health
South Eastern Sydney
Local Health District

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KEY TERMS	Scope of practice; Advanced scope; Extended scope; credentialing; governance; competency
SUMMARY	The purpose of this policy is to define, describe and document the governance and responsibility for the clinical activity of allied health professionals undertaking extended roles/practices or advanced roles within SESLHD.

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Extended and Advanced Clinical Practice Roles for Allied Health Professionals

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to provide a governance framework for allied health professionals practicing at advanced or extended clinical scope within South Eastern Sydney Local Health District (SESLHD), with the focus of ensuring the highest standard of clinical practice is maintained. This policy applies to health professionals employed under the NSW Health Service Health Professionals (State) Award, the Health and Community Employees Psychologists (State) Award, and the Health Employees Pharmacists (State) Award, NSW Health Service Allied Health Assistants (State) Award.

To ensure the provision of safe and quality care, Allied Health professionals are required to demonstrate that they are appropriately skilled and experienced to perform their roles safely and are operating within their agreed scope of clinical practice. Scope of clinical practice processes are key elements in ensuring patient safety ([Safety and Quality.gov.au](https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au)). There is a difference between the scope of practice of a profession and the individual's scope of practice.

When considering scope of practice, allied health disciplines should have established processes for reviewing scope of practice at an organisational level, and a documented process for credentialing their staff.

Processes that support credentialing include:

- Position description:
 - The position description outlines the purpose, key accountabilities, relationships and core requirements of a position or role.
 - It should be reviewed annually and whenever a vacancy arises to ensure that it reflects the requirements of the role and the broader organisational needs.
 - The selection criteria must reflect the minimum skills, knowledge, experience and other attributes required to perform the inherent requirements of the position.
 - Any selection criteria developed must be clear and concise, and directly relate to the position. Refer to [NSW Health Policy Directive PD2023_024 - Recruitment and Selection of Staff to the NSW Health Service](#).
- Grading/Credentialing Committee:
 - All positions must be graded appropriately.
 - The grading structures and definitions applicable to the grading and classification of all positions are set out in the relevant industrial instrument for each occupational group.
 - New positions must go through a formal grading process which involves an assessment of the Position Description.
 - *Regrading* refers to the process of reviewing and seeking approval to change the level of an existing position within a classification eg from AHP Level 3 to AHP Level 4.
 - *Reclassification* refers to the process of changing the classification of a position as opposed to just the level eg from L1/2 SW to L1/2 SW/OT/Psych

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- Performance development review:
 - An annual performance development review provides an opportunity to give feedback on an individual's performance, identify training and development needs, improve performance goals, and develop a clear, shared understanding of the expectations of the role. This also provides an opportunity to review scope of practice and whether any requirements for maintenance of currency have been met.
- Clinical supervision processes:
 - Regular clinical supervision is an activity of professional support and learning which empowers individual practitioners to develop knowledge and competence, maintain responsibility for their own practice and optimise safety and quality of care in complex clinical situations.
- Documented process supporting an individual's extended scope of practice:
 - Any role that is outside the currently recognised scope of practice of an AHP requires a documented process that sets out the training and practice requirements to support the professional to practice at extended scope.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

Director Allied Health: Ensure effective processes are in place for credentialing and defining scope of practice.

Allied Health Discipline Advisors: Ensure the policy is disseminated and education is delivered. Ensure appropriate competency programs, clinical support and supervision is available for individuals to maintain and further develop their scope of practice.

Department Heads/Managers: Responsible for clinical governance of scope of practice issues within their department. Ensure register of individuals practicing at advanced or extended scope is maintained and appropriate re-credentialing is followed.

Allied Health clinicians: To practice within their defined clinical scope of practice. To make clinical judgements about their own practice and what is within their own capacity and scope of practice, and to refer to other members of the healthcare team when an activity is beyond their own capacity or scope of practice.

3. DEFINITIONS

Advanced Scope of Practice: A role that is within the currently recognised scope of practice for that profession but is not taught as part of the minimum qualifications for that profession. The advanced role may require additional training as well as significant professional experience and competency development.

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Credentialing: The formal processes used to verify the qualifications, experience and professional standing of allied health staff for the purposes of forming a view about competence, performance, and professional capacity to provide safe, high quality healthcare services within South Eastern Sydney Local Health District.

Extended Scope of Practice: A role that is outside the currently recognised scope of practice for a profession and requires some form of credentialing following additional training, competency development and significant professional experience, as well as either legislative change or a commitment to local governance and risk management within the health service.¹ Changes to an individual’s scope of practice, as with the introduction of any new practice or technology, requires organisational level governance review. This may be via the Allied Health Grading Committee, the SESLHD Clinical and Quality Council or New Interventions and Procedures Committee.

Scope of Practice: A profession’s scope of practice is the full spectrum of roles, functions, responsibilities, activities and decision-making capacity that individuals within that profession are educated, competent and authorised to perform. The routine expectations of the tasks and roles that the profession can and cannot perform. Professionals from that discipline would be expected to practice within the scope of their discipline. Refer to the relevant professional association for further information.

The discipline defined scope of practice may be outlined by the professional association of the discipline and documents the currently accepted breadth of practice within which a discipline operates. An individual’s scope of practice may vary from the discipline defined scope of practice. Not all health professionals will be operating at the top of their scope when they first enter the workforce, neither will they all undertaking all aspects of their discipline scope of practice.

It is up to discipline heads of department or service managers in consultation with the discipline advisor, to determine what clinical practices are within scope of their discipline workforce based on the experience and training of their employees. Similarly, advanced scope practices will be locally agreed and identified, but will fall within the discipline’s defined scope of practice.

4. COMPETENCY/ASSESSMENT

As part of defining scope of practice for individual allied health clinicians or allied health assistants, each allied health discipline is responsible for providing a competency program for relevant clinical activities or techniques considered high risk to consumer safety. Relevant education and training may be provided through a work-based learning program or external professional development, and a process to determine achievement of competency should be developed. Assessment of competency takes into account knowledge, skills, formal training and experience and is performed by a suitably qualified and experienced health professional.

A register of all allied health professionals who have a recognised advanced or extended scope of practice will be held by the Director of Allied Health. A clinician will be placed on the register

¹ *Registration and Credentialing for Clinical Staff (excluding medical and nursing)* Austin Health 2013.

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by their line manager or discipline advisor once they have successfully completed the required assessment of competency. The line manager will provide details of the clinician's advanced or extended scope, and any requirements for reviewing or maintaining competency via the Allied Health Directorate SESLHD-DistrictAlliedHealth@health.nsw.gov.au.

Each Allied Health Discipline Advisor and/or service manager and must endeavour to ensure that their staff do not practice beyond their scope without having the necessary competence.

5. CLINICAL ACTIVITY OF EXTENDED AND ADVANCED ALLIED HEALTH PRACTITIONERS

The delivery of safe, effective care and management of patients is paramount. All SESLHD Allied Health professionals must fulfil their requirements for registration with the appropriate Board via AHPRA or the relevant registering body or be eligible for professional association membership where registration is not available. For registered professionals, it is the professional responsibility of every clinician to ensure they maintain currency of registration with the requisite authority.

Clinical staff are encouraged to inform their manager of any current clinical skills, competencies, training, credentialing or post-graduate qualification they hold, including those relating to advanced or extended scope of practice.

The manager will determine whether these credentials apply to their position within SESLHD, and if a change to their role, classification or position description is appropriate.

Clinical staff may only practice any advanced scope of practice covered by an endorsement or registration, internal clinical credentialing or other clinical credentialing if it is within the context in which they have been employed to practice by SESLHD.

A list of requirements for employment and the advanced and extended scopes of practice recognised in SESLHD for each discipline and covered by this policy is outlined in [Appendix 1](#).

A decision tree to support the decision-making process regarding advanced and extended scope of practice is included at [Appendix 2](#).

See [Appendix 3](#) for a schematic diagram of scope of practice.

Any concerns regarding the clinical practice of an allied health professional in SESLHD should be flagged with the service manager and the Director of Allied Health as soon as possible.

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Appendix 1 - SESLHD Registration Requirements by Discipline

Discipline	Registration Authority/ Professional Body	Requirements for Employment	Advanced Scope of Practice	Extended Scope of Practice
Aboriginal Health Liaison Officer	None	None	None	None
Audiology	Audiology Australia https://audiology.asn.au/Home	Masters degree in clinical audiology and eligible for full membership of Audiology Australia or equivalent qualification	None	None
Art therapy	Australia and New Zealand Art Therapy Association https://www.anzacata.org/	Eligible for professional membership of the Australia and New Zealand Art Therapy Association	None	None
Counselling	Australian Counselling Association https://www.theaca.net.au/	Bachelor degree in counselling or equivalent qualification	None	None
Diversional Therapy	Australian Recreational therapy Association Australian Recreational Therapy Association [ARTA]	Qualifications recognised by Australian Recreational Therapy Association	None	None
Exercise Physiology	Exercise and Sport Science Australia (ESSA) https://www.essa.org.au/	Accredited Exercise Physiologist with ESSA	None	None
Genetic Counselling	Human Genetics Society of Australasia (HGSA) https://www.hgsa.org.au/	Board eligibility with HGSA	None	Online genetic test prescription [#]
Music Therapy	Australian Music Therapy Association (AMTA) https://www.austmta.org.au/	Eligible for registration with AMTA or equivalent qualification	None	None
Nutrition and Dietetics	Dietitians Australia (DA) https://dietitiansaustralia.org.au/	Eligible for full membership of DA, qualification or proof of membership sighted as evidence	Complex Eating Disorders	Insertion/removal of nasogastric feeding tubes

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Discipline	Registration Authority/ Professional Body	Requirements for Employment	Advanced Scope of Practice	Extended Scope of Practice
				Replacement/ management of gastrostomy feeding tubes
Occupational Therapy	Occupational Therapy Board of Australia (OTBA) https://www.occupationaltherapyboard.gov.au/ via Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) https://www.ahpra.gov.au/	Mandatory AHPRA registration	Lymphoedema Head and Neck Wound – Compression Therapy Driving Assessment and Training	Vestibular Clinic Lead
Orthoptics	Australian Orthoptic Board (AOB) https://www.australianorthopticboard.org.au/ And Australian Sonographer Accreditation (ASAR) https://www.asar.com.au/	Eligible for registration with Australian Orthoptic Board ASAR: Mandatory registration for Orthoptists using ultrasonography	None	None
Orthotist/Prosthetist	Australian Orthotic Prosthetic Association (AOPA) https://www.aopa.org.au/	Eligible for full membership of AOPA	None	None
Pharmacy*	Pharmacy Board of Australia https://www.pharmacyboard.gov.au/ via Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) https://www.ahpra.gov.au/	Mandatory AHPRA registration	Oncology charting Parenteral nutrition management COVID-19 vaccine management	None
Physiotherapy	Physiotherapy Board of Australia https://www.physiotherapyboard.gov.au/ via Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) https://www.ahpra.gov.au/	Mandatory AHPRA registration	Joint relocation/fracture reduction Cannulation/Venepun cture	Urodynamics

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Discipline	Registration Authority/ Professional Body	Requirements for Employment	Advanced Scope of Practice	Extended Scope of Practice
			Wound assessment and management Lymphoedema Continence and womens' health Fitting of pessaries	
Play Therapy/Child Life Therapy	Australian Play Therapists Association http://apta.asn.au/	Qualifications as per Health professionals Award	None	None
Podiatry	Podiatry Board of Australia https://www.podiatryboard.gov.au/ via Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) https://www.ahpra.gov.au/	Mandatory AHPRA registration	Total Contact Casting	AHPRA Registration Endorsement – Limited medication prescribing
Psychology	Psychology Board of Australia https://www.psychologyboard.gov.au/ via Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) https://www.ahpra.gov.au/	Mandatory AHPRA registration	AHPRA registration Endorsed Areas of Practice eg Clinical Psychology Clinical Neuropsychology Board approved Supervisor Training	None
Sexual Assault Worker		Qualifications as per Health professionals Award	None	None
Social Work	Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) https://www.aasw.asn.au/	Eligible qualifications or proof of membership sighted as evidence	Sexual Assault	Naloxone provision and education – evidence of credentialing via ORTHN program*

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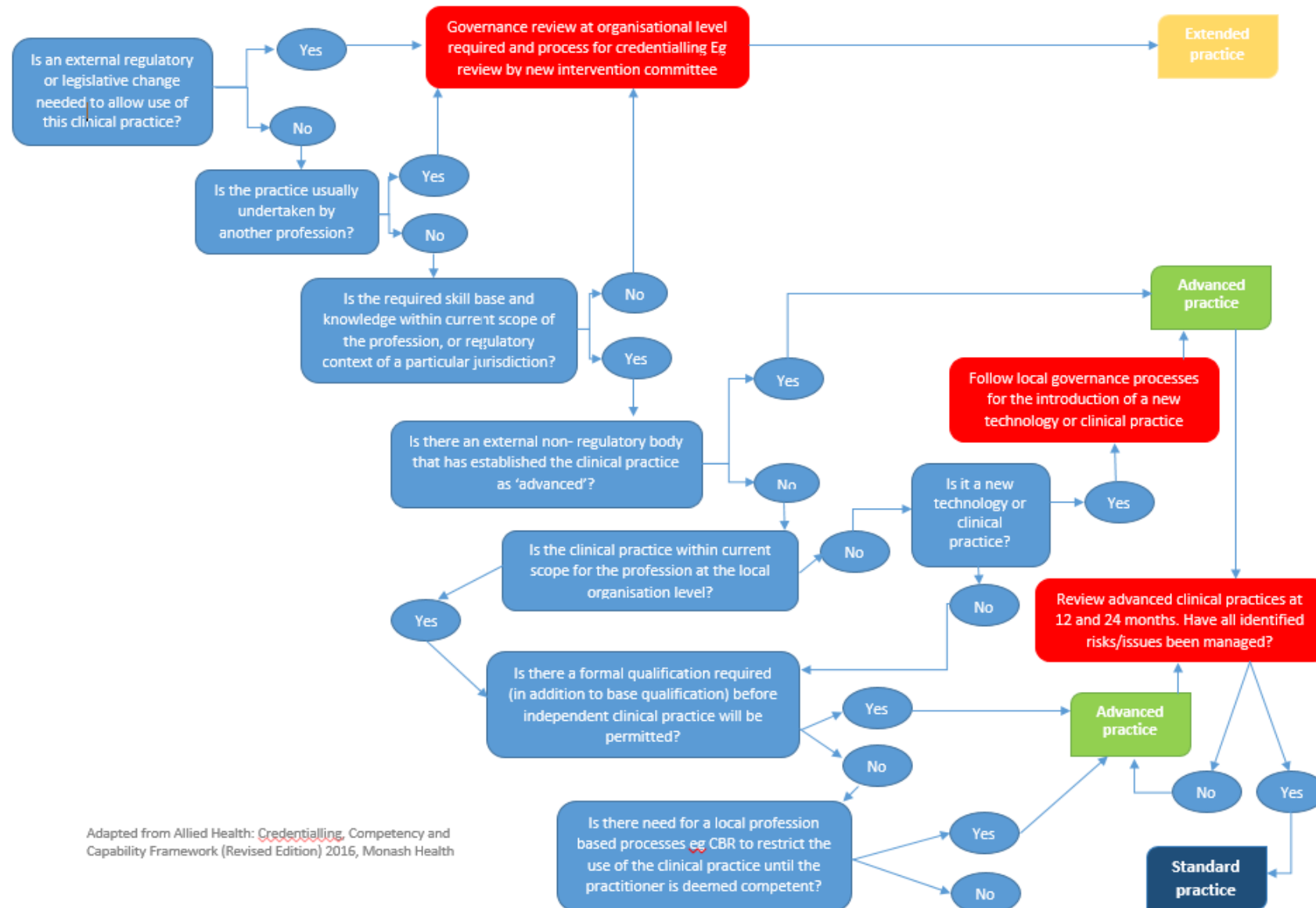
Discipline	Registration Authority/ Professional Body	Requirements for Employment	Advanced Scope of Practice	Extended Scope of Practice
Speech Pathology	Speech Pathology Australia (SPA) https://www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au/	Eligible qualifications or proof of membership sighted as evidence	Tracheostomy, VFSS, paediatric feeding and other techniques not taught in undergraduate degree: Staff complete relevant competency training programs	Fibreoptic Endoscopic Examination of Swallowing (FEES)

* Opportunities for advanced scope of practice may be available for Pharmacy technicians and Allied Health Assistants.

Please discuss with your line manager.

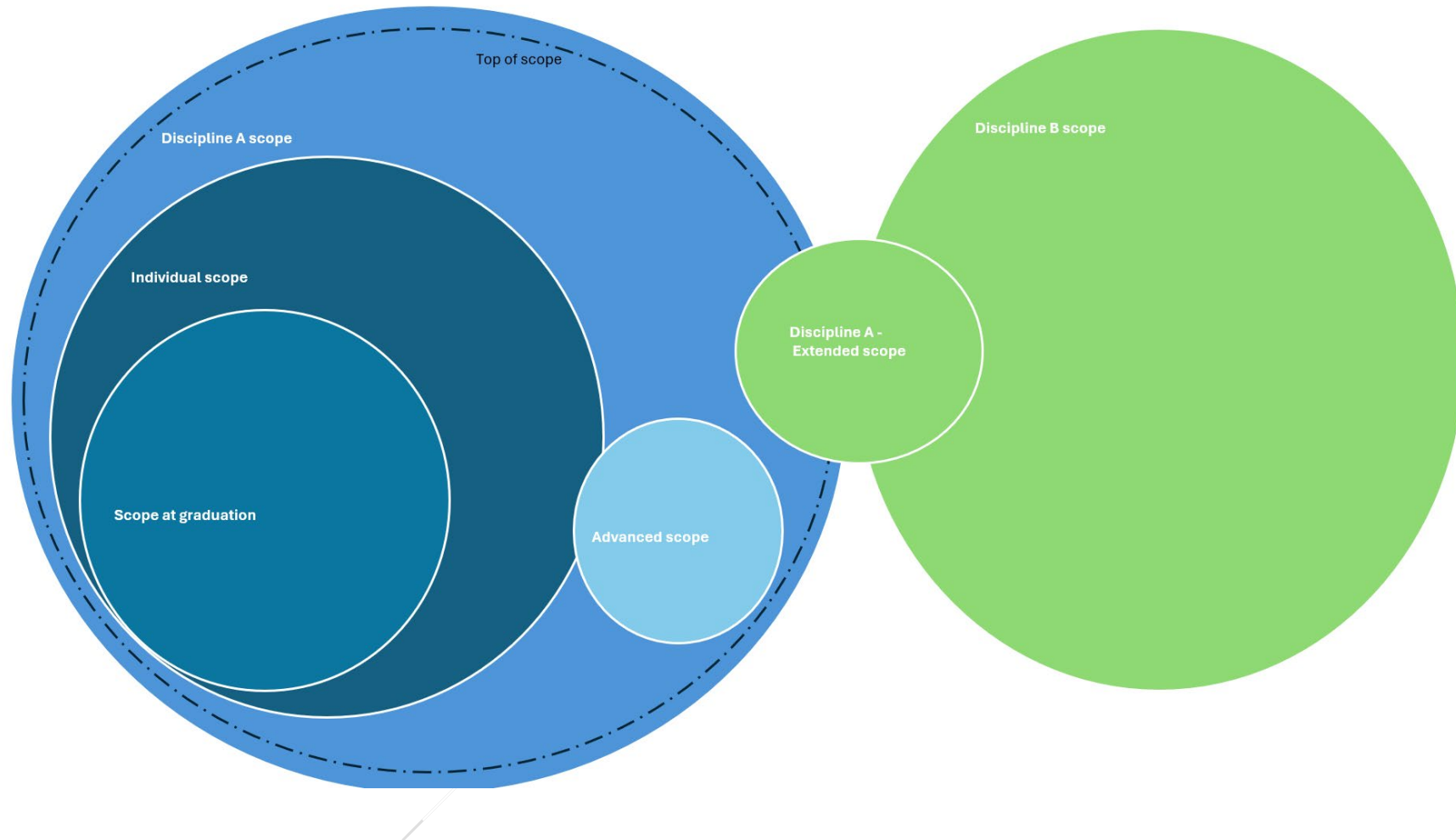
Not yet offered in SESLHD

Appendix 2 - Decision Tree



Adapted from Allied Health: Credentialling, Competency and Capability Framework (Revised Edition) 2016, Monash Health

Appendix 3 – Scope of Practice Schematic



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6. EXTERNAL REFERENCES

1	Credentiailling of Clinicians – ACSQHC
2	SESLHDPR/771 - Credentiailling Allied Health Professionals – Registered and Non-Registered professions
4	Credentiailling, Competency and Capability Framework (Revised Edition) Monash Health 2016

7. VERSION AND APPROVAL HISTORY

Date	Version No.	Author and approval notes
April 2021	DRAFT	Draft for Comment period.
July 2021	DRAFT	Feedback incorporated and final version approved by Executive Sponsor. To be tabled at Clinical and Quality Council for approval.
August 2021	1	Approved at August Clinical and Quality Council.
12 September 2024	1.1	Minor update to maintain currency. References and hyperlinks updated.