

## The Aim of the Bachelor of Nursing

Nursing at the University of New England (UNE) has a long and proud tradition. UNE was one of the first Australian universities to offer a Bachelor of Nursing (BN) course. Our original mission was to provide access to nursing education for rural and remote students and to ensure the provision of a well-educated rural nursing workforce. This original mission remains as a key goal in our current course delivery. Our graduates are recognised for their disciplinary knowledge, practical skills and ability to think critically about the world in which they live and work. For a relatively small, regional education provider, our graduates are well represented in significant leadership positions in health care, education and government across the country.

The BN aims to prepare graduates as beginning-level registered nurses who are skilled, thoughtful, and evidence-based practitioners who are equipped to provide person-centred care and contribute to the maintenance and development of the profession of nursing. Students are educated to be lifelong learners who are responsive to the varying needs of people within a changing society and who act as change agents in the profession and the healthcare industry.

The BN at UNE is well recognised for its innovative curriculum, use of technology and flexibility. Being a regional university is not without its challenges, such as issues associated with distance for both students and staff, including recruiting and retaining high quality nursing academic staff. Additional challenges common to all providers of nursing programs include the ongoing effects and adjustments associated with the dynamic policy and practice environments in both the health and higher education sectors; the impact of the internet on education provision; challenges in obtaining and maintaining quality workplace experience opportunities for students; and student expectations that they are afforded flexibility in study options while meeting work and family commitments. Well-established relationships formed with our nursing colleagues in practice and partnerships with healthcare services enable and support our endeavours in nurse education.