



Te Kaunihera Tapuhi o Aotearoa
Nursing Council of New Zealand

GUIDE TO REGISTRATION AS A NURSE IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

Nurses registered in Australia

A different registration process under the Trans Tasman Mutual Recognition Act 1997 (TTMR Act) applies if you are registered in Australia.

Please refer to the application forms for TTMR Act applicants.

Midwives

For registration as a midwife, please contact:

The Midwifery Council of New Zealand
Level 2

Alan Burns Insurance House

71 Boulcott Street

PO Box 24-448

Manners Street

Wellington 6142

New Zealand

www.midwiferycouncil.org.nz

Introduction

The following information is for internationally qualified nurses applying for registration with the Nursing Council of New Zealand (the Council) following the introduction of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (the Act) on 18 September 2004.

The principal purpose of the Act is to protect the health and safety of members of the public by providing mechanisms to ensure health practitioners are competent and fit to practise their professions.

The Act requires that nurses must be registered in a scope of practice and applicants for registration must:

- have the prescribed qualifications
- be fit for registration, which includes the ability to communicate in and comprehend English for the purpose of practising nursing
- be competent to practise within their scopes of practice.

Scopes of practice

The Council maintains a register of all nurses registered with the Council. Nurses are registered in the following scopes of practice:

- Registered nurse
- Enrolled nurse
- Nurse practitioner
N.B. Nurses must be registered in the registered nurse scope of practice before applying for nurse practitioner status.

Enrolled nurses: Overseas-educated second-level nurses will be registered under the Act as enrolled nurses.

Conditions may be included in an individual's scope of practice to clarify the practice setting and/or specify any other conditions determined by the Council.

The following table sets out some examples of how overseas nurses' registrations translate to the New Zealand scopes of practice and conditions.

Example of overseas nurse registration	Scope of practice under the Act	Conditions
Registered general nurse	Registered nurse	May practise only in general nursing
Registered mental health nurse	Registered nurse	May practise only in mental health nursing
Registered sick children's nurse (UK)	Registered nurse	May practise only in child health nursing
Registered learning disabilities nurse	Registered nurse	May practise only in settings which provide services for consumers with intellectual disability
Enrolled, registered professional or vocational nurse	Enrolled nurse	

The Council assesses each application on an individual basis and does not operate a system of reciprocal registration, **except** with Australia.

The guide includes the following sections
Section A: Registration requirements
Section B: Application process and requirements
Section C: General information

All forms and documents must be completed in English. If a document is received in a language other than English you will be required to attach an official translation.

Section A: Registration requirements

Qualification requirements

Internationally qualified nurses applying for registration must have:

- registration with an overseas regulatory authority; and
- an equivalent international qualification; and
- at the direction of the Nursing Council, a pass in an assessment of the Nursing Council competencies for Registered Nurses by an approved provider; and/or
- successful completion of a Nursing Council approved competency assessment

Fitness for registration

You must satisfy the Council that you are fit to practise nursing. You are required to complete a statutory declaration on the application form as to whether or not you:

- are able to communicate in and comprehend English sufficiently to protect the health and safety of the public
- are unable to perform the functions of nursing practice because of some mental or physical condition
- have been convicted by any court in New Zealand or elsewhere of any offence
- are under investigation, or the subject of professional disciplinary or criminal proceedings in New Zealand or another country
- have been declined registration with any other regulatory authority (nursing or other profession) in New Zealand or overseas
- are aware of any reason why your registration may endanger public health or safety.

Each situation above will be considered on a case-by-case basis and you will be given the opportunity to provide further clarification when required.

Competence to practise

Competence will be assessed through:

- your educational equivalence and

- you may be required to pass an assessment of the Nursing Council competencies for Registered Nurses by an approved provider, AND/OR successful completion of the Council-approved competence assessment programme.

Competence assessment programme

Competence assessment programmes are generally six to eight weeks long and include a theoretical and a clinical component.

If you are required to undertake a competence assessment programme, a fee will be charged by the programme provider. This fee is set by the individual educational provider and is not payable to the Council.

The list of approved competence assessment providers in New Zealand can be viewed on the Nursing Council website: www.nursingcouncil.org.nz

Section B: Application for registration process and requirements

The application for registration is a two-stage process. When all requirements are met for Stage One, you will be sent the request forms for Stage Two.

Stage One

To meet the requirements for Stage One, you must submit:

- a completed application form
- an application fee
- certified copies of your
 - registration certificate (Philippines – authenticated copy of Board certificate)
 - passport
 - IELTS or OET certificate
- original copies of your
 - police certificate
 - curriculum vitae
 - two professional references
 - character reference
 - employment letter with hours worked as a registered nurse in the last 3 years

All of the required documents (except the transcript of training and verification of registration) must be supplied with your application, otherwise your application will be returned to you. Applications are not processed until all documents have been received.

Once we have received the required information, you can expect to receive an acknowledgement letter within five to 10 working days. Please ensure we have your current contact details.

Stage Two

When the Council has received all the documents listed above, you will be sent the following request forms:

- Verification request form

- Transcript request form.

Once we have received the required information, it can take 20 to 40 working days to complete an assessment. Please ensure we have your current contact details.

You must not submit an application, fee and documents if you are unable to meet the requirements for registration in New Zealand.



See CHECKLIST for help in ensuring all documents for Stage One are submitted

STAGE ONE

Application form

You must fill this in yourself. Please check your personal details on this form are correct. Please remember to sign and date your application form. If you do not sign and date it, we are unable to process it.

Once your application and fee have been received, we will give you a personal reference number. You should quote this number whenever you contact us.

You must send the completed application form, the relevant supporting documents and your application fee together.

- Part A – complete all questions and personal details. If an applicant has a nominated agent, complete the authority section.

Fee for registration

The total application fee is **NZ \$485.00**.

Please note that the \$485.00 fee is non-refundable.

- Part B – answer the questions and **sign** the declaration in the presence of a person authorised to take statutory declarations. This person must also sign the declaration.

Reference request forms

The Council requires three references to be provided in support of an application: two professional and one personal reference.

Professional references

- The originals of two professional references must be on letterhead paper and include the workplace contact details, from the senior nurse at your current place of employment and from a nursing supervisor, to confirm your employment and your ability to deliver safe and effective practice.

- The references need to be signed and dated; the referee should indicate her/his medical credentials and role, and must make reference to post-registration experience.
- They should also include the contact details of the referee.
- We do not accept references from nursing agencies.

Character reference

- The original of one character reference from a person who has known you for at least two years. The person does not need to be a nurse but must not be a family member.
- The reference needs to be signed and dated and should include the contact details of the referee.

English language requirements

To meet the English language assessment requirement, you need to provide certified documentary evidence of an English Language Assessment (ELA).

a) *International English Language Testing System (IELTS) ACADEMIC TEST*

You must achieve a minimum score of 7.0 for **each** band: reading, listening, writing and speaking.

This does not need to be achieved in a single sitting of the IELTS test, but can be gained over a succession of tests.

The total of seven in each band must be achieved within 12 months of first sitting the test.

OR

b) *Occupational English Test (OET)*

You must pass the OET with a score of at least B in each section.

This does not need to be achieved in a single sitting of the OET test, but can be gained over a succession of tests, providing the applicant uses the same candidate number.

Information on the IELTS test can be found at the website: www.ielts.org

Information on the OET can be found at the website: www.occupationalenglishtest.org

You can take the test either onshore or offshore. We **strongly recommend** you complete this test before emigrating to New Zealand.

The English Language Assessment must be less than two years old at the time of application.

Curriculum vitae

A curriculum vitae is required that provides a detailed record of your post registration nursing experience including dates employed, name of employer(s), position(s) held and

areas of practice, including actual nursing duties. It should also provide details of your education qualifications.

Certified copy of passport

A certified copy of your current passport details page showing a clear photograph.

Police certificate

You are required to provide the **original** of a police certificate (less than six months old when received by the Council), as evidence of whether or not you have had any convictions that are punishable by three months imprisonment or more. This must be from the **national** or **federal** police force of your country of residence, **not** state or regional police.

If you do have a court conviction you should provide any explanation or documentation you would like the Council to consider in deciding whether your registration will be successful.

Certified copy of your registration certificate

You are required to provide evidence of your initial registration in your home country (registration certificate) and of your current registration status, from your relevant regulatory authority, or in the absence of a regulatory system, from the highest nursing authority or professional body under which you have practised.

Philippines – must be an authenticated Board certificate.

Name change document

You are required to provide a certified copy of a change of name or marriage certificate document if your name does not match all documents.

Philippines – must be an authenticated name change document.

Evidence of nursing practice hours

The Council requires evidence of 450 hours of nursing practice hours as a registered nurse within the last three years. This can be a letter from your employer, on letterhead paper, signed, dated and include the authors contact details. Alternatively, we can accept certified copies of payslips (must be 450 hours' worth).

If the application form, payment and the other documents listed in Stage One are not ALL included and do not meet the requested requirements, then an application will be returned to you.

STAGE TWO

Once a complete application for registration is received meeting the requirements for Stage One, you will be issued with the request forms required for Stage Two and a reference number.

The reference number will be printed on the forms and will be used on all future correspondence regarding registration. You can use this number when contacting the Council with any queries.

Verification

The Council requires evidence of your overseas nursing registration by verification from the regulatory authority you are currently registered with. You will send the request form to your registration authority or licensing board. The verification will be sent **directly** from the authority/board to the Council.

The registration authority/licensing board will:

- give details of your registration or license to practise
- confirm that it is current
- sign the supporting declaration of good health and good character.

Transcript of training

Evidence of your nursing qualification will be required as part of your application. You will be required to provide a full transcript of your nursing training together with a full syllabus. This transcript and syllabus must be sent **directly** from the nursing school where an applicant trained.

The assessment process

Once we have all of the required documents, we consider each completed assessment individually. We cannot tell you what the Council's decision will be until the completion of the assessment.

Once we have received and checked all required information for Stages One and Two, you can expect an assessment on an application to be completed within 20 to 40 working days. Please ensure we have your current contact details.

Section C: General information

Applicant files: Applicant files remain open for a period of 12 months. If all required documentation has not been received, an application will expire. Documents may be destroyed after 12 months.

Retention of information: If an application is successful, the Council will retain the application and supporting documentation. It is preferable that an applicant does not forward original documents (except when these have been specifically requested), as the Council will not return documents while an application is being processed for registration.

Your privacy rights: In terms of the Privacy Act 1993, information supplied in respect of your registration is confidential to the Council. This information is used for the purpose of processing your application. The applicant has a right of access to, and correction of, personal information held by the Council.

Fraudulent or altered documentation: It is a criminal offence to knowingly make a false declaration of good health and good character, or to make an incorrect or misleading statement about any cautions or convictions.

Every person who makes a false declaration commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding \$10,000 by virtue of section 172 of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003.

New Zealand nursing medals: Internationally qualified nurses may apply for New Zealand nursing medals after being formally registered.

Certified copies: All copies of documents must be certified as true copies of the originals by a solicitor, justice of the peace, notary public or other person authorised to take a statutory declaration.

Applicants from the Philippines:

Procedure for the authentication of public documents in the Philippines for use in New Zealand.

1. The public document shall be authenticated and notarised by a duly commissioned notary public in the Philippines or any other official duly authorised by law to perform notarial functions.
2. The document certified shall be submitted to the Department of Foreign Affairs for authentication by its Authentication Division.
3. The duly authenticated document shall then be submitted to the Consular Section of the Embassy of New Zealand in the Philippines which shall certify the authenticity of the signature affixed by the authentication officer of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Please note that the passport needs to be a certified copy of the photo page of the passport. It does not need to be authenticated.

All forms and documents must be completed in English. If a document is received in a language other than English an applicant is required to provide an official translation when submitting the document.

Employment: The Council does not hold employment information and cannot assist with employment for overseas nurses.

It is strongly advised that an applicant does not set a start date for employment until they are registered and hold a current practising certificate.

Immigration: Please note that immigration requirements do not come under the jurisdiction of the Council.

An applicant is strongly advised to complete their registration BEFORE they complete their immigration requirements.

- (a) Internationally qualified nurses wishing to practise in New Zealand must meet registration requirements with the Council **and** immigration requirements with the New Zealand Immigration Service.
- (b) If there is not a New Zealand diplomatic post in the applicant's country, please contact Immigration New Zealand, PO Box 3705, Wellington, New Zealand or by phone (if calling from overseas) +64 9 914 4100, and (if calling from within New Zealand) 0508 558 855, or website: www.immigration.govt.nz.

- (c) Residents of the United Kingdom should contact the New Zealand High Commission, New Zealand House, 80 Haymarket, London SW1Y 4TQ with immigration enquiries, or website: www.nzembassy.com/uk.

Unsuccessful applications

If you do not meet the New Zealand criteria for registration, your application will be declined and you will not be accepted for registration. If this is the case, we will provide you with reasons for this decision.

What if I disagree with your decision?

You may disagree with the decision and want to discuss the outcome or provide further information. If this is the case, you should write to the Registration Manager explaining why you disagree with the decision and setting out any concerns or questions you may have.

Review/Appeal of the decision to decline registration

If you disagree with the decision not to register you or to register you in a different scope of practice or to include conditions in your scope of practice, you may provide a written and/or oral appeal and we will include guidance on how to request these.

Application for a practising certificate

To start nursing practice you will need to apply for a **practising certificate**. All New Zealand registered nurses must hold a practising certificate before they commence nursing in New Zealand. A separate fee for a practising certificate is payable upon registration. A person will be sent information about this **after** they have been formally registered.

HOW TO CONTACT US

If you have any questions please contact:

Overseas Registrations
PO Box 9644
Wellington 6141
New Zealand

Phone: +64 4 385 9589
Fax: +64 4 801 8502
Email: overseas@nursingcouncil.org.nz
Website: www.nursingcouncil.org.nz

The Nursing Council office is open Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.00pm.