



# Framework for the approval of professional development and recognition programmes

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**Te Kaunihera Tapuhi o Aotearoa**  
Nursing Council of New Zealand





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# Introduction

The Nursing Council of New Zealand (the Council) is the authority responsible for regulating nursing practice under the Health Practitioners Competency Assurance Act 2003 (the Act). The Act aims to protect public health and safety by ensuring health practitioners are competent and fit to practice their professions. One way the Council supports this is by recognising recertification programmes to maintain ongoing competence for nurses, as outlined in section 41 of the Act.

Professional Development Recognition Programmes (PDRPs) are recognised by the Council as an established means for nurses to demonstrate their continuing competence to practise. PDRPs are developed by employers and recognised by the Council when they meet established criteria. To ensure these programmes remain consistent, reliable, and valid, the Council formally reviews and approves them every three years.

The enrolled nurse and registered nurse standards of competence are fundamental to the structure of PDRPs. They form both the design and assessment criteria and strengthen the legitimacy of PDRPs as a mechanism for nurses to demonstrate continuing competence. Additionally, nurses who opt to undertake the PDRP process are exempt from recertification audits and are therefore not required to provide evidence of continuing competence to the Council.

The Framework for approval of professional recognition programmes set out the requirements that PDRPs must meet to gain Council recognition. By meeting these requirements, nurses ensure they maintain the skills, knowledge, and abilities necessary to provide safe and effective care to the public.

## PDRP requirements

To be approved by the Council as a recertification programme under section 41 of the Act, the programme must meet the following criteria:

### 1 The programme complies with the Council's legislative requirements.

- 1.1** The programme will ensure that the nurse meets the following criteria:
- **Practice hours:** complete a minimum of 450 hours (60 full-time working days) of practise during the previous three years (36 months)
  - **Professional development:** complete a minimum of 60 hours of professional development relevant to the nurse's scope of practice during the previous three years (36 months) and be able to link professional development to their relevant standards of competence
  - **Timeframes:** has processes in place to ensure the nurse undertakes an assessment of competence every three years.





## **2 The programme will have clearly defined and documented portfolio assessment processes.**

- 2.1** The portfolio assessment process is valid, reliable and documented and includes evidence that meets the relevant standards of competence.
- 2.2** The portfolio assessment is undertaken by nurse assessors who are engaged in PDRP and are assessed as competent against the standards of competence for their scope of practice.
- 2.3** Formal education for nurse assessors is provided by the employer.
- 2.4** Decisions about individual portfolio assessments are documented and can be available to Council on request.

## **3 The programme will have clearly defined quality improvement processes.**

- 3.1** The coordinator of the programme is a nurse with a current annual practising certificate and a current PDRP portfolio.
- 3.2** The programme is reviewed externally at least five-yearly by the employer. This review must include feedback, both from nurses generally and from nurses in the programme.
- 3.3** The outcome of the review is made available at the Council's request.

## **4 The programme has in place reliable data compliance processes.**

- 4.1** Programme providers must provide the Council with:
  - the total number of nurses in the programme, including the full name, registration number and compliance date
  - formal documentation that details the sharing of a particular PDRP with an external organisation.

# **PDRP approval**

All PDRPs must be approved by the Council every three years.

This process requires a statutory declaration from the Chief Nurse or similar (in the case of Health New Zealand — the district Chief Nursing Officer). This statutory declaration must:

- confirm that the programme meets the Council's requirements, and
- confirm that the organisations with whom they have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to provide PDRP, also comply with the Council's requirements.

A declaration template is available on page 5.

The Council reserves the right to review the programme in full if required.





# Sharing programme delivery

Programme providers may have relationships with external agencies (e.g., Health New Zealand and an aged care facility) to deliver an existing programme. If this is the case, an MOU must be developed between providers to ensure quality and consistency of the programme. The Council may request a copy of the MOU.

The Council will require the data specified under Data Collection (standard 4) for all nurses enrolled in the programme.

# Changes to a programme

A programme provider may make changes to their programme. All changes must meet the Council's requirements.

# Declaration

The Nursing Council recognises and approves all Professional Development Recognition Programmes ("PDRP") for the purpose of nurses meeting their continuing competence requirements under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 ("the Act").

## Declaration

Full name:

Registration number:

Title:

Organisation:

Email address:

I [**insert name**] solemnly and sincerely declare that the following PDRP [**insert name**] complies with the Nursing Council's framework for the approval of a PDRP.

I also declare that my organisation has written documentation (i.e., memorandum of understanding) with other organisation(s) that assist in the delivery of the PDRP and that these organisations comply with the Council's PDRP framework.

Signature:

Date:





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