



GUIDE TO REGISTRATION AS A NURSE IN NEW ZEALAND

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

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
Navigate House
69–71 Boulcott Street
PO Box 24-448
Manners Street
Wellington 6142

B. REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

General requirements

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

Please note all internationally qualified applicants must supply evidence of nursing practice hours for the past three years while registered as a nurse. This must be in a written format and verified by your employer.

Qualification requirements

Overseas nurses applying for registration must have current registration or enrolment with an overseas regulatory authority **AND**

- an overseas qualification assessed as equivalent to a New Zealand qualification by the Council
- some applicants must also successfully complete a programme approved by the Council for the purpose of assessing competencies for the scope of practice in which registration is sought.

Verification

The Council requires evidence of your overseas nursing registration by verification from the regulatory authority with which you are currently registered. This verification must be sent **directly** from that authority to the Council.

Fitness for registration

All applicants must satisfy the Council that they 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 applicants will be given the opportunity to provide further clarification when required.

Police certificate

All internationally qualified applicants 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 they have any convictions. This must be from the national or federal police force of the applicant's country of residence, **not** state or regional police.

English language requirements

All internationally qualified nurses from countries where English is not the first language, are required to complete an English language assessment.

The Council will accept one of the following:

- a) pass the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) Academic test with 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) pass the Occupational English Test (OET) with a score of at least B in each section.

Information on the IELTS test can be found at the website: <http://www.ielts.org/>

Information on the OET can be found at the website: <http://www.occupationalenglishtest.org/>

The test results **must be sent directly to the Council** by the testing centre. The Council will not accept copies sent from applicants. The test results must be less than two years old.

As from 1 January 2009 **all** internationally qualified nurses, including those from English speaking countries, will be required to complete an English language assessment **prior to** applying for New Zealand nursing registration.

Competence to practise

Competence Assessment Programme

Competence assessment programmes are generally 6–8 weeks long and include both 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 education 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:

[http://www.nursingcouncil.org.nz/Competence Assessment Programmes 21 July 2008.pdf](http://www.nursingcouncil.org.nz/Competence%20Assessment%20Programmes%2021%20July%202008.pdf)

Application fee

The total application fee is **NZ \$485.00**. This payment covers the following:

Processing fee (non-refundable)	\$420.00
<i>Guidelines for Cultural Safety, the Treaty of Waitangi and Maori Health</i>	\$15.00
Registration fee	\$50.00
Total	\$485.00

Please note that the \$420 processing fee is non-refundable and will not be refunded if your application is withdrawn.

Please do not submit your application, fee and documents until you are able to meet the requirements for registration in New Zealand.

C. APPLICATION PROCESS

The Council will process and assess your application **ONLY** when the application fee has been paid and all required documents have been received.

An application number will be allocated to your application once the fee and application form have been received. This number should be quoted on all subsequent communication with the Council.

D. 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
- Nurse assistant.
- Nurse practitioner (*N.B. Nurses must be registered in the registered nurse scope of practice prior to applying for nurse practitioner status*)

Nurse assistants

Overseas educated second-level nurses will be registered under the Act as nurse assistants.

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	Nurse assistant	

1. INFORMATION TO REGISTER AS A NURSE IN NEW ZEALAND – FORM 1

Please read this guide carefully to follow the process of registration.

2. CHECKLIST FOR APPLICANTS – FORM 2

The checklist is to assist you to complete your application.

3. APPLICATION FORM: FORM 3

- Part A – complete all questions and personal details.
- Part B – answer the questions and **sign** the declaration in the presence of a person authorised to take statutory declarations.

4. FEES PAYMENT FORM: FORM 4

Complete the section that is relevant to your payment option.

5. VERIFICATION REQUEST FORM: FORM 6

Complete Part A of this form and send a copy to the nurse regulatory authority in each country or jurisdiction in which you are registered. These regulatory authorities must complete this form and return it directly to the Council.

6. TRANSCRIPT FORM: FORM 6

- Part A – complete all questions and personal details and return to your school(s) of nursing to complete Part B.
- Part B – your school(s) of nursing must complete and return Part B directly to the Council with a transcript and other relevant documents attached.

7. AUTHORITY FORM: FORM 7

If you wish to give someone else authority to act on your behalf, and allow them to have access to information pertaining to your application, please complete this form, and send it directly to the Council.

8. REFERENCE REQUEST FORMS: FORMS 8 AND 9

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

- Professional references:** The **original** of two professional references on **letterhead** and including the workplace contact details, from the senior nurse at your current place of employment and from a nursing supervisor.
- Character references:** 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.

9. CURRICULUM VITAE (CV)

A curriculum vitae is required that provides a detailed record of all 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.

10. CERTIFIED DOCUMENTS

Please forward certified copies of the following documents with your application. A certified copy is a photocopy of the original that has been certified as a true copy.

PLEASE NOTE

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 make a statutory declaration.

- (a) passport
- (b) marriage certificate or evidence of change of name (when applicable)
- (c) nursing registration certificate (**a copy of the statement of entry onto the NMC register is required for UK registered nurses**)

11. 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 notarised document shall then be transmitted to the Legal Department of the Office of the President, Malacanang. The Legal Department shall certify that the signature of the notary public is authentic.
3. The document certified by the Legal Department of the Office of the President shall be submitted to the Department of Foreign Affairs for authentication by its Authentication Division.
4. The duly authenticated document shall then be submitted to the Consular Section of the Embassy of New Zealand in the Philippines which shall certify to the authenticity of the signature affixed by the authentication officer of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

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



See CHECKLIST – FORM 2 for help in ensuring that you have completed all requirements

E. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. **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 18 months.
2. **Retention of information:** If your application is successful, the Council will retain your application and supporting documentation. It is preferable that you do not forward original documents (except when these have been specifically requested), as the Council cannot guarantee that these can be returned. If your application is not successful, your documents will be returned, if requested. Applicants who require the return of particular documents must request this in writing.
3. **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.
4. **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 commits an offence is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding \$10,000 who makes a declaration or representation that is false or misleading or produces a document knowing it to contain a false declaration, or produces a document knowing it is not genuine.
5. **Photocopies** of documents that are required to be certified must be certified in the manner described on the previous page. Faxed, scanned or e-mailed documents are not acceptable.
6. **All forms and documents** must be completed in English. If a document is in a language other than English, a certified translation of all the detail in the document must be provided, or this will be requested, and any additional costs will be charged to the applicant.
7. **After** you have been registered you will need to apply for a **practising certificate**. You must hold a practising certificate before you commence nursing in New Zealand. You need to provide a letter from your recent nursing employer stating that you have completed at least 60 days or 450 hours of nursing practice within the last three years. The fee for a practising certificate is NZ \$96.00 per year. You will be sent information about this **after** you have been formally registered.
8. **Certificates:** The Council issues you a **registration certificate** once your registration has been approved. Your **registration certificate** will state your scope of practice and any conditions that may apply.
9. **Medals:** Internationally qualified nurses may apply for New Zealand nursing medals.
10. **Employment:** The Council does not hold employment information and cannot assist with employment for overseas nurses.

It is strongly advised that you do not set a start date for employment until you are registered and hold a current practising certificate.

11. **Immigration:** New Zealand Immigration Service requirements and the Council's requirements are separate and may differ.

You are strongly advised to complete your registration BEFORE you complete your immigration requirements.

- (a) Nurses from overseas countries wishing to practise in New Zealand must meet both 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 your country, please contact Immigration New Zealand, PO Box 3705, Wellington, New Zealand or by phone (if calling from overseas) +64 9 9144100, and (if calling from within New Zealand) 0508558855, or website: www.immigration.govt.nz
- (c) Residents of the United Kingdom should contact the New Zealand High Commission, New Zealand House, Haymarket, London SW1Y 4TQ with immigration enquiries.

HOW TO CONTACT US

If you have any questions please contact:

Overseas Registrations	Phone: +64 4 385 9589
PO Box 9644	Fax: +64 4 801 8502
Wellington 6141	Email: oseas@nursingcouncil.org.nz
New Zealand	www.nursingcouncil.org.nz