

Nursing Council of New Zealand Enrolled Nurse Scope of Practice and Prescribed Qualifications Amendment Notice 2025

Pursuant to sections 11(1) and 12(1) of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 ("the Act"), the following notice is given.

Notice

Title and commencement

(1) This notice may be cited as the Nursing Council of New Zealand Enrolled Nurse Scope of Practice and Prescribed Qualifications Amendment Notice 2025.

(2) This notice comes into effect on **1 September 2025**.

(3) On 1 September 2025, this notice revokes and replaces the Nursing Council of New Zealand Enrolled Nurse Scope of Practice and Prescribed Qualifications Amendment Notice 2024 published in the *New Zealand Gazette*, 13 November 2024, Notice No. 2024-s15814.

Dated at Wellington this 4th day of July 2025.

CATHERINE BYRNE, Registrar, Nursing Council of New Zealand.

Explanatory Note

Introduction

Under sections 11(2) and 12 of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003, the Nursing Council of New Zealand (the Council) is required to describe the scopes of practice for nursing in New Zealand and prescribe the qualifications for each scope of practice.

The Council undertook a significant review of the registration process and prescribed qualifications for internationally qualified nurses (IQNs) to become registered in New Zealand (for both registered nurses and enrolled nurses). A specific focus was how the Council assessed the competence to practise of IQNs. The Council proposed a model that focused on outcomes and directly assessing competence. The model proposed was for IQNs to sit a theory exam and an objective structured clinical exam (OSCE). It was also proposed that there be a structured learning programme to enable IQNs to orientate to the New Zealand healthcare context.

From 4 April 2022 to 16 May 2022, the Council consulted widely on the proposals. A number of organisations submitted feedback as well as individuals (the Council received approximately 395 responses). Overall, the responders were supportive of the proposals. Feedback included support for introducing a more standardised, consistent, robust and rigorous approach to competence assessment, specifically through the use of an OSCE. Professional organisations noted their support for this approach in terms of aligning with our international counterparts, in particular Australia, the United Kingdom and other countries.

The proposal for the education programme for IQNs also garnered positive views on the whole.

The Council has replaced the Competence Assessment Programme (CAP) by prescribing qualifications requiring a pass in a theory exam, OSCE and to successfully complete a 'Welcome to Aotearoa New Zealand' programme of education.

The Council has further set a prescribed qualification for 1800 hours of post-registration nursing practice, which will ensure that IQNs applying to become enrolled nurses have prior experience working as a nurse.

On 19 October 2023, the Council approved the IQN registration changes for registered nurses and also approved in principle the changes for enrolled nurses. The implementation work was progressed for registered nurses, but was deferred for enrolled nurses until the enrolled nurse scope and Standards of Competence work was completed and for work to be undertaken in respect of the Theory Exam and OSCE for enrolled nurse IQNs.

On 22 May 2025, the Council formally approved the changes to the registration process and prescribed qualifications for internationally qualified enrolled nurses.

Scope of Practice

Enrolled Nurses

Enrolled nurses in Aotearoa New Zealand reflect knowledge, concepts and worldviews of both tangata whenua and tangata tiriti. Enrolled nurses uphold and enact ngā mātāpono – principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, based on the Kawa Whakaruruhau framework and cultural safety, promoting equity, inclusion, diversity, and rights of Māori as tangata whenua. These concepts also relate to Pacific peoples and all population groups to support quality services that are culturally safe and responsive.

Enrolled nurses are accountable and responsible for their nursing practice, ensuring that all health care provided is consistent with their education, assessed competence, relevant legislative requirements, supported by relevant practice standards, and is guided by the Nursing Council of New Zealand's standards for enrolled nurses.

The enrolled nurse works in partnership and collaboration with individuals, their whānau, communities, and the interprofessional healthcare team, to deliver equitable person/whānau/whakapapa-centred nursing care, including advocacy

and health promotion, across the life span in all settings. An enrolled nurse's practice is informed by their educational preparation and practice experience and may include a leadership or coordination role within the healthcare team.

Enrolled nurses partner with people receiving health and/or disability support services to initiate and monitor care through nursing assessments, care planning, implementation and evaluation of care. Enrolled nurses must work with access to, and seek when appropriate, guidance from a registered nurse or other registered health practitioner.*

*A health practitioner is a person who is registered under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 – for example, a nurse practitioner, midwife or medical practitioner.

For the avoidance of doubt in other legislation where nurse is defined, this scope of practice includes general nursing and nursing functions.

Prescribed Qualifications

New Zealand Graduates

- a. Successful completion of an 18-month programme in enrolled nursing at level 5 on the New Zealand Qualification Authority – National Qualifications Framework accredited by the Nursing Council; and
- b. a pass in an assessment of the Nursing Council standards of competence for enrolled nurses by an approved provider; and
- c. a pass in an Examination for enrolled nurses.

Nurses From Overseas

- a. Current nursing registration with an overseas regulatory authority; and
- b. An international nursing qualification, assessed as being equivalent to the prescribed qualification for New Zealand Graduates for Enrolled Nurses listed at "a" above; and
- c. At least 1800 hours of post-registration practice as a Nurse; and
- d. Successful completion of a 'Welcome to Aotearoa New Zealand' programme accredited by the Council; and
- e. As directed by the Council, a pass in a Nursing Theory Examination for Enrolled Nurses set by the Council; and
- f. As directed by the Council, a pass in an Objective Structured Clinical Exam for Enrolled Nurses, approved by the Council, in Aotearoa New Zealand.