



# Guide to providing a complete application for registration within a vocational scope of practice

VOC3-B  
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For doctors who hold a postgraduate medical qualification which is not the prescribed New Zealand or Australasian postgraduate medical qualification

## Vocational registration application process

1. You submit an application for vocational registration to the Medical Council of New Zealand (Council).
2. Once complete, your application is sent to the relevant local specialist training college (Vocational Education and Advisory Bodies (VEABs) for assessment and preliminary advice.
3. The VEAB provides preliminary advice usually within 4 weeks of receiving the application.
4. Council staff draft a memorandum to Council's Registration Committee, detailing the VEAB's preliminary advice and whether or not you should be granted eligibility for provisional vocational registration.
5. If appropriate, the Registration Committee agrees to grant you eligibility for provisional vocational registration.
6. Usually within 4 weeks of Council receiving the VEAB's preliminary advice, you are sent a letter of eligibility for provisional vocational registration.
7. You find a job in New Zealand, if you do not already have one.
8. Council and the VEAB approve your job, subject to the provision of suitable supervision by your employer.
9. If your job is approved, you will be sent a letter confirming that you have met the requirements for provisional vocational registration.
10. You attend a 30 minute registration meeting with Council before starting work in New Zealand.
11. You are granted provisional vocational registration, issued a practising certificate and start work under supervision.
12. You attend an interview with the VEAB usually within 3 months of arriving in New Zealand.
13. The VEAB provides final advice usually within 4 weeks of the interview.
14. Council staff draft a memorandum to Council's Registration Committee, detailing the VEAB's final advice and the requirements you must meet to be granted full vocational registration.
15. If appropriate, the Registration Committee agrees to the requirements you must meet to be granted full vocational registration.
16. Usually within 4 weeks of Council receiving the VEAB's final advice, you are sent a letter confirming the requirements you must meet for full vocational registration.
17. When you meet the requirements, you can apply for full vocational registration.

**Please note:** if you are already working in New Zealand and hold another form of registration, your application will be sent to the VEAB with a request that they contact you to arrange an interview, so only points 1 and 12 to 17 will apply for you.

## Role of Vocational Education and Advisory Bodies

Council has authorised the Vocational Education and Advisory Bodies (VEABs) to act as agents of Council. The VEAB assesses the eligibility of applicants for vocational registration who are international medical graduate specialists, holding a relevant postgraduate medical qualification, but not a New Zealand/Australasian postgraduate medical qualification.

The VEAB considers the applicant's qualifications, training and experience and compares them against the New Zealand/Australasian standard, which is a vocationally registered doctor holding the New Zealand/Australasian postgraduate medical qualification. The VEAB must assess the individual merits of each applicant's qualifications, training and experience as no two applicants' circumstances will be the same. Council may ask the VEAB to provide preliminary advice and/or interview advice. The VEAB provides preliminary advice based on an assessment of the applicant's paper application only. The VEAB provides interview advice based on an assessment of the applicant's paper application and on information obtained directly from the applicant at an interview.

Council relies on the VEAB's advice to decide if an applicant should be granted eligibility to meet the requirements for vocational registration and to determine what those requirements should be. Council will provide the applicant with a copy of the VEAB's advice with formal notification of its decision.

Council also relies on the VEAB's advice in determining whether or not the applicant's proposed employment and supervision arrangements are suitable.

### **Preliminary advice**

If you are overseas and would like an initial indication of your likelihood of success, your application will be sent to the VEAB for assessment and preliminary advice. Based on the VEAB's preliminary advice, you may be granted eligibility for provisional vocational registration, which would enable you to work in New Zealand. You will be sent a link to pay this fee once your application is received. Payment of the fee must be made to Council, but 100% of the fee is paid to the VEAB.

If you request preliminary advice, the VEAB has 4 weeks to assess your paper application and provide Council with preliminary advice. Following receipt of the advice, Council will take a further 4 weeks to process the advice and provide you with a decision on your eligibility for provisional vocational registration. You should allow 8-10 weeks for Council to provide you with a decision. **Please note:** the clock only starts ticking once your application is complete.

**Please also note:** preliminary advice is a way to get an early indication of your likelihood of success in being granted vocational registration but, in most cases, it will not replace the interview stage.

### **Interview advice**

On arrival in New Zealand (or if you are already in New Zealand), it is likely that you will be required to attend an interview with the VEAB to determine the requirements you will need to complete for vocational registration. You will be sent a link to pay this fee once your application is received. Payment of the fee must be made to Council, but 100 percent of the fee is paid to the VEAB.

If you wish to skip the preliminary advice stage and go directly to the interview stage, upon receiving your complete application, the VEAB has 3 months to arrange and conduct the interview. Following the interview, the VEAB has 4 weeks to provide advice to Council. Following receipt of the advice, Council will take a further 4 weeks to process the advice and provide you with a decision on your eligibility for provisional vocational registration. You should allow 5-6 months for Council to provide you with a decision. **Please note:** the clock only starts ticking once your application is complete.

### **VEAB interview**

The VEAB interview will be conducted by an interview panel, usually three people, and will last for about 1 hour. The interview will take place face-to-face at the VEAB's office or at a mutually agreed site (or in some cases via videoconference).

During the interview you will be asked about:

- components of your training and the assessments and examinations you have undertaken
- your experience as a consultant since completing your training
- some general questions relevant to the branch of medicine in which you have trained and want to practise, including questions about clinical practices
- your continuing professional development, including peer review and audit activities
- cultural and ethical issues relevant to the practice of medicine in New Zealand, including the Treaty of Waitangi.

The interview panel will be required to ensure that you understand:

- the level of competence and safety required of a doctor holding vocational registration
- the range of practice required of a doctor holding vocational registration.

## Possible outcomes

If Council resolves to approve your vocational registration application, you may be required to complete one, or a combination, of the following requirements to be granted vocational registration:

- 6-18 months of supervised practice
- a period of supervised practice at a training hospital
- a vocational practice assessment, whereupon you would be visited at your workplace by two specialists in the same area of medicine, who would observe you in practice for a day
- a pass in the relevant VEAB's Fellowship examination
- any other requirements decided by Council.

If Council proposes to decline your application, you will have the opportunity to appeal against Council's proposed decision by making a submission to be considered at Council's next meeting (Council meets every 2 months). At the meeting, Council will consider your submission and will resolve either to approve or to decline your application. If Council resolves to decline your application, you may appeal against the decision in the District Court.

## Complete vocational registration application

Before you submit your application for registration you are required to have submitted the required documents to EPIC for verification (see following section: Primary source verification - EPIC).

You will need to supply the following documentation for a complete application:

- A completed VOC3 application form
- Evidence that you have submitted your qualifications to EPIC for verification (eg screenshots)
- Three completed referee reports, or names of 3 referees for Council staff to contact (please list this in section 9 of the VOC3 form)
- An up to date curriculum vitae (CV)
- Training/examination information
- For surgical scopes: a copy of your logbook of procedures
- Evidence of your continuing medical education in your area of medicine
- Your passport photo page (with the photo clearly visible)
- Evidence of your name change (if applicable), e.g. your marriage certificate, divorce decree, etc.
- Your International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or Occupational English Test (OET) results (if applicable).

If any of the above documents are not in the English language, you will need to obtain official English translations. The originals of the official English translations must be forwarded to Council's office.

You do not need to have a job in New Zealand to apply for vocational registration. However, if you have been offered a job in New Zealand, please also provide the following, in consultation with your employer:

- REG7 form – application for approval of position and supervisor
- Job offer
- Job description
- Supervision, induction and orientation plan.

## Primary source verification – EPIC

Council requires that doctors applying for registration who hold overseas qualifications, must have certain documents primary-source verified. This means the institution that awarded the overseas medical qualification or document (for example a medical school or university) is contacted directly to confirm the authenticity of the document. The ECFMG (Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates) provide this service, using their [EPIC](#) (Electronic Portfolio of International Credentials) service.

You will be required to have your documents primary-source verified through EPIC if you are:

- relying on international medical qualifications in your registration application. This includes doctors with primary medical degrees from Australian medical schools and with postgraduate qualifications from Australia-only vocational training providers;
- a first-time applicant for registration, and do not already, or have not in the past, held any other form of registration granted under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act (HPCAA);

- registered with the Council but are applying for a new scope of practice that relies on a qualification that has not been previously assessed by the Council and is relied on to support that new registration application.

Documents you must have verified:

- *Primary Medical Degree (Final Medical Diploma)*
  - Not required if you hold a degree awarded by Auckland or Otago University
  - Not required if you hold another form of registration in New Zealand where your primary qualification has already been verified.
  - An alternate Graduation Document such as a transcript or letter from your university may be used as alternative evidence of the Primary Medical Degree.
- *Postgraduate Qualification(s)* - A qualification or certification that permits you to practice medicine as a specialist. This can include board certification, completion of a specialty fellowship, or registration as a specialist.
  - Not required if you hold another form of registration where your postgraduate qualification has already been verified i.e locum tenens.
- *Specialist Qualification(s)* – A qualification that is awarded after a post graduate qualification. For example a copy of your completion of training or equivalent if you are a UK trained specialist.
  - Not required if you hold another form of registration where your specialist qualification has already been verified i.e locum tenens.

If your postgraduate and/or specialist qualification is from the USA, Canada or UK, you will need to submit the following documents for verification:

#### **United States of America**

- American Board certification

#### **Canada**

- Specialist certificate; and
- Fellowship certificate (if also awarded)

#### **United Kingdom**

- Membership and/or Fellowship certificate; and
- If awarded:
  - Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT); or
  - Certificate of Completion of Specialist Training (CCST); or
  - Certificate of Accreditation (JCHMT/JCHTA/JCHST); or
  - Certificate of Satisfactory Completion of Specialist Training (CSCST);

#### **Referee reports**

- Three referee reports must be provided in support of your vocational registration application.
- All three referees must be specialists in the area of medicine in which you are applying for vocational registration.
- All three referees must have worked with you for at least 6 months within the 3 last years and be able to comment on your current specialist practice.
- At least one referee must be from your current or most recent place of employment.
- Council staff will contact your referees directly, requesting that they each complete and return Council's RP6 form.
- Alternatively you can provide the RP6 form to your nominated referees and supply the completed reports with your application. Council staff will contact your referees directly to verify the reports.

## CV (curriculum vitae)

- List the dates of your appointments since completing your primary medical qualification in chronological order and in month/year format (e.g. August 2009-September 2010).
- Provide explanations of any gaps in your employment/appointment history.
- Provide descriptions of each appointment, including details of the hospital/department in which you worked; the number of hours per week you worked; your day-to-day duties/responsibilities, etc.
- List all of your relevant qualifications, memberships, etc.
- List all of your publications, presentations, etc.
- Ensure that your employment history matches what is detailed in section 5 of the VOC3 form.

## Name variations

If the spelling of your name is inconsistent on your primary and postgraduate medical qualifications and passport, you will need to either provide evidence of your name change, such as a certified copy of your marriage certificate or divorce decree, or, if the inconsistencies are due to misspellings/varying transliterations, you will need to provide an **original** statutory declaration or affidavit. Please refer to the statutory declaration form on Council's website: [Statutory Declaration](#).

## Training and examination information

You will need to provide a detailed description of the postgraduate training and examinations you undertook in the area of medicine in which you are applying for vocational registration.

Provide either a copy of your syllabus or your own detailed description, which must include details of the following:

- general medical experience, including length, structure, areas of medicine covered, etc.
- basic training in the area of medicine in which you are applying for vocational registration, including length, structure, aspects of specialty covered, etc.
- advanced training in the area of medicine in which you are applying for vocational registration, including length, structure, aspects of specialty covered, etc.
- subspecialty training, including length, structure, etc.
- in-training assessments, including provision of supervision/oversight, feedback on progress, etc. Provide copies of your in-training assessment reports (e.g. RITAs for UK-trained applicants)
- in-training research project
- was your training overseen, assessed and accredited by an external body (e.g. a nation- or statewide training institution/regulatory authority/etc.)?
- examinations, including:
  - entry examination
  - in-training examination(s)
  - exit examination
  - content and structure of the above examinations (e.g. written, oral, clinical, MCQ, viva components).
- were your training and examinations overseen, assessed and accredited by an external body (e.g. a nation- or state-wide training institution/regulatory authority/etc.)? Provide details.

## Logbook information (for surgical scopes only)

You will need to provide a copy of your logbook of procedures, preferably covering the period of your postgraduate training and the period since you were awarded your postgraduate medical qualification. The logbook should include:

- the name of each procedure performed
- the number of each procedure performed
- your role in performing each procedure.

Please ensure that all patient identifying information has been removed.

## Continuing medical education

You will need to provide evidence of your continuing medical education in your area of medicine. If you are participating in a formal continuing professional development/recertification programme, please provide copies of your participation certificates or equivalent evidence within the last 5 years. Alternatively, list the dates, locations and topics of courses/conferences you have attended within the last 5 years and provide copies of your participation certificates or equivalent evidence.

## Information to provide when applying for vocational registration in General Practice

You will need to ensure that you provide the following details with your application:

Describe general practice in the countries where you have worked, e.g.:

- Is it community or hospital based?
- Is it the first point of contact for health services?
- What role do nurses play in your general practice?
- What other allied professionals work in your general practice or the community that you refer patients to?

Describe your general practice training:

- Who were you taught by and where were you taught?
- How much training was hospital based and how much in general practice?
- What postgraduate general practice assessments did you do?
- What audits and patient surveys have been done – practice wide/personal to you?
- Is there a training manual to verify the above?

Describe your work experience:

- Dates of hospital rotations, specialty runs, names of hospitals
- Dates for general practice work (start and finish), names of practices, roles undertaken, time worked shown as tenths
- Description of daily/weekly workload
- Description of general practice work, e.g.:
  - How much direct patient contact and clinical work?
  - Variety of patients: age, gender, social factors, types of problems seen, continuity of care, etc.
  - Types of care: acute care and chronic care management
  - What hospital clinics or inpatient care is done while working in general practice?

Describe your ongoing professional development:

- What ongoing continuing medical education have you done?
- What peer review has been undertaken?
- What recertification assessments have been done?
- What publications or research have you been involved in?
- How much time has been spent out of practice?

## Information to provide when applying for vocational registration in Psychiatry

You will need to provide summaries of the following:

1. General adult psychiatry (inpatient and outpatient)
2. Child and adolescent psychiatry
3. Old age psychiatry
4. Addiction psychiatry
5. Consultation-Liaison psychiatry
6. Psychotherapy
7. Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT)
8. External examinations in psychiatry.

For each of the areas (1) to (5) above, list the duration of training in that area in months of Full Time Equivalents (FTEs). This is easiest for doctors who worked in discrete rotations, such as 6 months of old age psychiatry followed by 6 months of general adult outpatient psychiatry. For doctors who have more 'all in' training, please calculate the portion of time in each area. For example, a doctor who spends 6 months training in a mixture of general adult inpatient (4/10), general adult outpatient (4/10) and child psychiatry (2/10) converts to 2.4 months FTE in each of the general adult inpatient and outpatient areas and 1.2 month of child and adolescent experience. As well as the durations in these areas, list the types of patients seen, approximate numbers of patients (caseload), treatments offered and the nature of supervision for each experience.

Areas (6) and (7) above are less likely to be discrete rotations (though some doctors may have done specific psychotherapy placements during training). Provide an overview of the nature of your supervised experiences in psychotherapy and somatic therapy (specifically ECT). Again, it is helpful to indicate the approximate number of patients treated and, for psychotherapy, the type(s) of therapy employed and approximate number of sessions.

For area (8) provide details of the external examinations you sat, often with written and clinical components, that must be passed to gain your specialist qualification. Examples of such examinations include UK MRCPsych Part I and II exams, US Board Certification exams or Indian MD(Psych) or DNB exams. Provide a brief summary of the nature of the external examinations that you sat and your performance in these examinations (e.g. number of attempts to pass).

### **Information to provide when applying for vocational registration in Internal Medicine**

You will also need to complete and submit with your application the [Royal Australasian College of Physician's Additional Information Form](#).

### **Council's English language policy**

You must meet one of Council's seven English language policy requirements. Please refer to the VOC3 application form or the policy for more information: [VOC3 form](#) or [Policy on English language requirements](#).

### **Health disclosures**

If you are, or have ever been, affected by a mental or physical condition with the capacity to affect your ability to perform the functions required for the practice of medicine, you will need to provide the following information:

- a description of your condition(s), treatment and current health status
- the name(s) and contact details of your treating practitioner(s) – Council's Health Manager may contact your treating practitioner(s) for more information regarding your condition(s).

All health disclosures must be considered by the Health Manager, who must sign off on the disclosure(s) before your application can proceed.

### **Convictions**

If a court in New Zealand, or elsewhere, has convicted you of any offence(s) punishable by a period of imprisonment of 3 months or longer, you will need to provide certified copies of your conviction notice(s). You do not need to provide details of convictions concealed under the Criminal Records (Clean Slate) Act 2004. To find out if your convictions (if any) are concealed under this Act, please consult the Ministry of Justice website [www.justice.govt.nz](http://www.justice.govt.nz) or a lawyer.

### **Character, competence or conduct disclosures**

If you are, or have ever been, subject to any official investigations or proceedings regarding your character, competence or conduct, you will need to provide the following information:

- a description of event(s) (include claimant's name, date of incident, place of incident, date of claim and incident summary, outcome and date of outcome)
- any documentation available (court documents, correspondence from your lawyers, insurance company and the regulatory authority)
- certificates of professional status (good standing) from every jurisdiction in which you have practised in the last 5 years and from any jurisdiction(s) in which the investigation(s) or proceedings occurred, if more than 5 years ago.

All character, competence and conduct disclosures must be considered by Council's Medical Adviser and General Manager: Core Services, who must sign off on the disclosure(s) before your application can proceed.

### **Certificates of professional status (good standing)**

Before you can start work in New Zealand, Council will need to receive original certificates of professional status (good standing) from every jurisdiction in which you have practised in the last 5 years. Certificates of professional status (good standing) are valid for 3 months and must be dated within 3 months of your start date in New Zealand. Certificates of professional status (good standing) are normally issued by a national or state level registration authority (usually the local equivalent to the Medical Council of New Zealand). In most cases, the registration authority will send the certificate of professional status (good standing) directly to Council; however, you will need to request the certificates.

If you have character, competence or conduct disclosures, Council will need to receive original certificates of professional status (good standing) from every jurisdiction in which you have practised in the last 5 years, as well as from the jurisdiction(s) in which the incident(s) occurred, if more than 5 years ago. As certificates of professional status (good standing) are only valid for 3 months, it is likely that you will need to request further certificates closer to your start date in New Zealand.

## Council registration meeting

Following your arrival in New Zealand, you will need to attend a registration meeting with a Council agent who will confirm your identity; confirm your practice intentions and receive your practising certificate fee and certificate(s) of professional status (good standing) (if not sent directly to Council's office).

By the time you attend your registration interview all of your required documents must have been primary source verified through EPIC.

Council has agents based in Auckland, Christchurch and Dunedin. You can also meet with a staff member at Council's office in Wellington. You will be provided with the Council agents' contact details, together with a list of the documents you will need to present at the registration meeting, with the letter confirming that you have met the requirements for provisional vocational registration.

## Practising certificate

Following the Council registration meeting, the certified copies of your original documents will need to be forwarded to Council's office in Wellington. Once received, Council staff will process the documents and issue your practising certificate, which will be emailed to you. Please allow at least 5 working days for your practising certificate to be issued. The fee for your first practising certificate will be calculated using your employment start date. Wherever possible, we will advise you of the amount to be paid in your letter of eligibility for provisional vocational registration. The Council agent will confirm the amount to be paid at the registration meeting.

**Please note:** you must have a practising certificate before you can start work.

## Where to send your application

Level 28, Plimmer Towers, 2-6 Gilmer Terrace, Wellington, 6011, New Zealand (for packages)

PO Box 10 509, The Terrace, Wellington, 6143, New Zealand (for letters)

Contact: from overseas +64 4 384 7635, or from within NZ 0800 286 801

You can send any queries to [registration@mcnz.org.nz](mailto:registration@mcnz.org.nz).