



Occupational Therapy Board of New Zealand

TE POARI WHAKAORA NGANGAHAU O AOTEAROA

FOSTERING FAITH AND CONFIDENCE IN THE PROFESSION

Assessment of fitness, qualifications and competence for registration

In order to gain registration in New Zealand, applicants must:

- be fit for registration
- be qualified for registration
- be competent to practise

Fitness for registration

This relates to issues such as health, criminal convictions, English language proficiency and disciplinary matters. All applicants are required to provide the OTBNZ with supporting documentation in terms of their fitness for registration.

Qualification for registration

The prescribed New Zealand qualifications for registration are:

- Bachelor of Health Science (Occupational Therapy), AUT University
- Bachelor of Occupational Therapy, Otago Polytechnic

Applications for registration from practitioners who have undertaken their training overseas are considered on a case by case basis - the OTBNZ does not operate any form of accreditation in terms of overseas qualifications. In making a decision about eligibility for registration the OTBNZ considers the comparability of an applicant's qualification to the prescribed New Zealand qualification for registration.

In some instances the applicant's occupational therapy qualification is not considered to be comparable to the prescribed New Zealand qualifications. In such cases the OTBNZ will consider whether the combination of the applicant's occupational therapy qualification, with previous and postgraduate work experience and training, is comparable to entry level competencies for registration. In other words, whether the gaps identified in the occupational therapy degree programme are mitigated by other experience, training or educational qualifications. Where applicants fail to satisfy the OTBNZ of the equivalence of their qualification and competence to practise, they may be given the opportunity of undertaking the OTBNZ's examination.

Competence to practise

Overseas qualified applicants for registration are required to submit a competence assessment application. This application is completed as a self-assessment of competence in each of the seven competencies for registration.

The OTBNZ also requires a competence assessment application from:

- some previously registered practitioners who have not held a practising certificate in the last three years – but see * below
- applicants who have qualified in New Zealand but have not applied for registration within 12 months of graduating.

Returning therapists will fall into one of the following two categories:

- Practitioners who have not practised in New Zealand during the last three years, but who have practised overseas for at least two of the last three years.; OR
- Practitioners who have not practised in New Zealand during the last three years, and have not practised overseas for at least two of the last three years.

* In some instances practitioners who have not practised in New Zealand during the last three years, but have practised overseas for at least two of the last three years, may not be required to submit a competence assessment application. They may instead provide an attestation to their competence from an occupational therapist with whom they have worked for at least six months continuously