



## Occupational Therapy Board of New Zealand

TE POARI WHAKAORA NGANGAHAU O AOTEAROA

FOSTERING FAITH AND CONFIDENCE IN THE PROFESSION

### **REGISTRATION INFORMATION FOR OVERSEAS QUALIFIED OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS**

*See also Registration Policy for Overseas Qualified Occupational Therapists*

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# **Registration Information for Overseas Qualified Occupational Therapists**

## **Application and Timeframe**

This information is for individuals who have graduated with an Occupational Therapy Qualification outside of New Zealand.

The competence assessment and practising certificate application process does not usually exceed six weeks in total - from the time the OTBNZ receives a complete application. This should be taken into account when making travel and employment plans.

## **Introduction**

In order to work legally as an occupational therapist in New Zealand, you must:

- be registered with the Occupational Therapy Board of New Zealand (OTBNZ), which is the regulatory body governing the practice of occupational therapy; *and*
- hold a current practising certificate.

## **Requirements for registration**

Under section 15 of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (HPCA Act) the OTBNZ may register applicants within the scope of practice 'General Scope of Practice: Occupational Therapist' if they:

1. are fit for registration in accordance with section 16; *and*
2. have the qualifications that are prescribed, under section 12, for that scope of practice; *and*
3. are competent to practise within that scope of practice.

## ***Fitness for Registration***

The OTBNZ is required to take the following into account:

1. English Language requirements;  
→ *If English is not your first language, please refer to the English Language Policy for Registration*
2. Assessment of criminal convictions;

- *If you have a conviction, please refer to the Police Report Policy*
3. Physical and mental health;

→ *If you have a physical or mental health condition/injury, please refer to the Fitness Policy*
  4. Good standing with other Regulatory Authorities.

If any of the above apply to you, this must be declared on your online registration application form. The named policies are on the OTBNZ's website.

### **Qualification and Competence for Registration**

#### *Qualification Assessment*

Overseas qualifications are considered on a case by case basis by the OTBNZ's Qualification and Competence Assessors, who consider the comparability of the qualification to New Zealand qualifications, and entry level competency. The OTBNZ does not accredit overseas occupational therapy qualifications.

Where applicants fail to satisfy the OTBNZ of the comparability of their qualification they may be given the opportunity of undertaking the OTBNZ's Examination.

#### *Competence Assessment*

Applicants demonstrate their competence to practise through the competence assessment application, where they describe how they have demonstrated the OTBNZ's competencies for registration through their occupational therapy practice, and relevant life experiences.

### **Practising Certificates**

While registration is one-off, a practising certificate must also be applied for every year that you wish to practise. An annual practising certificate is valid from 1 April to 31 March each year. You can either apply for your practising certificate as part of your registration application or, if you are not practising, you may choose or apply for your practising certificate at a later date.

*You will not be able to commence practising as an occupational therapist, until you are registered and hold a current practising certificate.* For this reason, it is crucial that you submit your application well before you intend to begin practising.

Practising certificates are issued electronically by OTBNZ. Your electronic practising certificate (ePC) will be available on your myOTBNZ account.

### **ePortfolio**

The ePortfolio is the OTBNZ's recertification programme in terms of section 41 of the HPCAA. When you commence practising, you will be required to participate in the OTBNZ's recertification programme: the ePortfolio. It is an online platform that permits you to demonstrate continuing competence, goals and development activities, online via the practitioners-only area of the website. Participation in the ePortfolio is a compulsory requirement while you are practising. Practitioners must actively participate and meet the requirements of the OTBNZ's ePortfolio. For further information refer the ePortfolio Handbook.

### **Submitting your application:**

1. Apply online;
2. Post your documentation and fees to the OTBNZ

You will need to provide the following (please refer to the notes for further information):

1. Online application for overseas qualified registration → [www.otboard.org.nz](http://www.otboard.org.nz)
2. Registration fee for overseas qualified registration → *refer to Fees*
3. Practising Certificate application and fee → *if you wish to apply for a practising certificate;-*
4. Competence assessment application:
  - a. Certificate of completion of *Foundations in Cultural Competency* course;
  - b. Competence self-assessment forms;
  - c. Employee/Supervisor/Referee form x3
5. Curriculum vitae;
6. Three fitness references
7. Original or certified copies of:
  - a. Birth certificate;
  - b. Passport OR New Zealand driver's licence;
  - c. Legal evidence of name change (*if applicable*);
  - d. Occupational therapy qualification certificate;
  - e. Academic transcripts;
  - f. Course description/academic syllabus;

- g. Letter(s) of good standing → *must be original documents from every authority you have been registered with;*
  - h. Criminal convictions report/Police report; *(a current report is required from every country you have lived in)*
  - i. IELTS results → *if English is not your first language;*
8. Additional information *(if applicable)* on:
- a. Health issues;
  - b. Disciplinary issues;
  - c. Convictions.

## NOTES

### Fees

Refer to the OTBNZ's payment form

The fee for registration and assessment is NZ \$ 1188.00

The fee for an annual practicing certificate is \$ 500.00 (Full practicing year) OR \$ 190.00 (Short term practising certificate – up to three months)

The OTBNZ accepts payment in NZ dollars only, by either:

- Cheque
- Credit/Debit cards (Visa or Mastercard)

### Certified documents

A certifying official may be a Justice of the Peace, Commissioner for Oaths, Court Registrar, Solicitor or Notary Public, and must comply with all the following:

- 1) Sign the copy
- 2) Print his/her name under the signature
- 3) State his/her position or designation
- 4) Endorse the copy with his/her official stamp &/or seal (where applicable)
- 5) Provide his/her contact details to enable the OTBNZ to seek verification

Certified documents must also be sent in hard copy, not electronically or faxed, and the certification should be done on the same page as the document.

### Curriculum Vitae (Resume)

Your curriculum vitae should provide information on your work history and experience as this is considered as part of your assessment of competence.

Your work history should be recorded in chronological order beginning with the most current employment/practice/volunteer work. Please record the month and year you commenced and ended each employment/voluntary work period. If there are periods during which you have not done any occupational therapy work, please document these and explain what you were doing during this period/s. Please also explain any gaps in your work history.

### **Fitness reference form**

The OTBNZ Reference form allows your referees to attest to your fitness for registration.

#### *Who can complete reference forms?*

- At least two previous or current occupational therapy supervisors or managers, who are also an occupational therapists who have known you for 12 months; *or*
- another health professional in good standing whom you have known for at least 12 months.

#### *How do I submit them?*

Each reference form must have the declaration section completed and signed by yourself, before you pass it on to your referees to complete.

Following completion, your referees must sign and submit the reference themselves to the OTBNZ in hard copy, or by email, if they are emailing from a work email address. The OTBNZ will not accept references submitted by yourself.

### **Certificate/letter of good standing**

This is required if you have ever been registered with any other regulatory authority, either in NZ or overseas. Certificates of good standing must be no older than six months

This document is not the same as a certificate of registration. As well as confirming your registration with the authority, it also provides information on whether there have been any complaints, investigations or disciplinary action taken during the time you were registered.

If you have practised in a country that does not regulate occupational therapists, you will be asked to provide documentation acceptable to the OTBNZ to

demonstrate your good standing. This could also be by way of a statutory declaration.

If the initial certificate or letter of good standing becomes dated before a decision is made on your application, we may ask you for a further certificate/letter.

### **Criminal convictions/police certificate**

If you have lived in NZ you must give consent to the OTBNZ as a third party, to obtain a criminal convictions report on their behalf from the New Zealand Ministry of Justice. To do this, download the Ministry of Justice Request for Criminal Conviction History – Third Party from the OTBNZ website, complete it and send it to the OTBNZ.

If you have lived overseas after your registration with the OTBNZ, you will need to submit a police report from every country you have lived. Please factor in the time required to obtain overseas police reports as this is required to complete your application.

A police report must:

- Be dated no older than six months - However, the OTBNZ may accept a police report that is older than six months, if you can satisfactorily demonstrate that you have not lived in the relevant country or countries since the issue of the police report/s. *This can be done by way of a **statutory declaration***
- Search you in every name you have ever been known by (including nicknames and aliases) – *unless the search has been done by fingerprint and the report contains a statement to this effect;*
- Be an original document or a correctly certified copy.

If the initial criminal convictions report/police report becomes dated before a decision is made on your application, we may ask you for a further report.

Additional information (*if applicable*) on:

- a. Health issues;
- b. Disciplinary issues;
- c. Convictions.



## OTBNZ Requirements for Translating Documents

If some or all of your documents required for your registration application are in a language other than in English, you must provide the OTBNZ with English translations of all such documents.

**Note:** If you are an overseas trained occupational therapist the documents you send will include the course description/academic syllabus of your occupational therapy qualification and your academic transcript or student record. The OTBNZ has a database of some syllabi/information of overseas courses. If you have course information that requires translating please contact the OTBNZ Professional Advisor on [enquiries@otboard.org.nz](mailto:enquiries@otboard.org.nz) beforehand to make sure that you are required to provide a translation of the coursework.

Please ensure you follow the steps as outlined below when having documents translated:

1. Translations must be prepared by a recognised official translation service. The translation must not be prepared by you, or any member of your family, or any person interested in the outcome of your application.
2. The OTBNZ recommends that you use a translator or service recommended by the NZQA. *Refer the NZQA website at Translation of documents » NZQA for a list of recommended translators/services.*
3. The translations must be prepared from either the original or a certified copy of the original. *Refer the OTBNZ website on how documents should be certified.*
4. Translations must be on official letterhead and bear the stamp/official seal, full name and signature of the translator or translation service.
5. All translations of original language documents, including notarised documents, must be certified as correct by an official of the translation service.
6. Translations must be securely stapled or attached to the original language document.
7. Translation costs are your responsibility.