



Occupational Therapy Board of New Zealand

Kaihaumanu Tūroro o Aotearoa

**REGISTRATION INFORMATION
FOR PREVIOUSLY REGISTERED
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS APPLYING FOR
RESTORATION TO THE REGISTER**

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REGISTRATION INFORMATION FOR PREVIOUSLY REGISTERED OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS APPLYING FOR RESTORATION TO THE REGISTER AND A PRACTISING CERTIFICATE

Important Note: *This information is for individuals whose name has been removed from the register. If your name does not appear on the public register, this does not necessarily mean that your name has been removed. If you are uncertain whether your name has been removed, please contact the Occupational Therapy Board of New Zealand (OTBNZ).*

INTRODUCTION

In order to work legally as an occupational therapist in New Zealand it is necessary to:

- be registered by the OTBNZ, which is the regulatory body governing the practice of occupational therapy
- hold a current practising certificate.

The practising certificate application process does not usually exceed four weeks in total - from the time the OTBNZ receives a complete application. However, it may take longer than four weeks if you are required to provide a written competence assessment application. This should be taken into account when making travel and employment plans.

REQUIREMENTS FOR RESTORATION TO THE REGISTER OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS

Under section 15 of the HPCA Act the OTBNZ may register applicants within the scope of practice 'General Scope of Practice: Occupational Therapist' if they:

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

Fitness for registration

(i) Assessment of criminal convictions

Section 16(c) of the HPCA Act 2003 states that no applicant for registration may be registered if he or she has been convicted in New Zealand or elsewhere of any offence punishable by imprisonment for a term of 3 months or longer, and he or she does not satisfy the responsible authority that, having regard to all the circumstances, including the time that has elapsed since the conviction, the offence does not reflect adversely on his or her fitness to practise as a health practitioner of that profession.

The OTBNZ will consider each case on its merits in order to be satisfied that the person is fit to practise as an occupational therapist in New Zealand.

(iii) Physical and mental health

For registration purposes the OTBNZ must be satisfied that applicants are able to perform the functions required for the practice of occupational therapy, and that they are not prevented from doing so because of some mental or physical condition.

(iv) Good standing

In determining an applicant's fitness for registration, the OTBNZ is required to take into consideration:

- professional disciplinary proceedings (whether in New Zealand or in another country)
- investigations in respect of any matter that may be the subject of professional disciplinary proceedings (whether in New Zealand or in another country)
- orders of professional disciplinary tribunals (whether in New Zealand or in another country)
- any issue which may give the OTBNZ reason to believe that the applicant may endanger the health or safety of members of the public

PRACTISING CERTIFICATE APPLICATION

Once registered, in order to work legally in New Zealand practitioners are required to hold a current practising certificate. The OTBNZ ensures that all practitioners with a current practising certificate are competent to practise.

Recognition is given to the differing levels of knowledge and experience of occupational therapists returning to the workforce in New Zealand

The OTBNZ recognises that occupational therapists returning to practice in New Zealand have differing levels of knowledge and experience, and therefore differentiates when requiring competence assessments, or imposing conditions.

Therapists applying for restoration to the Register will fall into one of the following three categories:

1. Practitioners who have practised in New Zealand during the last three years; OR
2. 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.¹; OR
3. 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.

The requirements for each of these categories are shown below.

1. Practitioners who have practised in New Zealand during the last three years

To apply for restoration to the Register and a practising certificate when you have practised in New Zealand during the last three years. (*Refer to the Notes below for additional guidance*).

You will need to provide the following:

1. Online application for restoration to the Register (at www.otboard.org.nz)
2. Restoration to the Register fee
3. Practising certificate application and fee
4. Originals or correctly certified copies of:
 - a) birth certificate
 - b) personal details pages of passport or New Zealand drivers licence
 - c) legal evidence of name change (if applicable, e.g. marriage certificate)

¹ The two years does not need to be continuous.

- d) certificate or letter of good standing or verification from every registering authority with which you have been registered – no older than six months when received by the OTBNZ
- 5. record of criminal convictions or a police certificate since you last practised in NZ, from every country in which you have lived no older than six months on receipt by the OTBNZ
- 6. Additional information (if applicable) on:
 - a) health issues
 - b) disciplinary issues
 - c) convictions

2. 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

These practitioners are required to:

- demonstrate their competence by:
 - Provide an attestation to their competence from an occupational therapist who has no conditions on their scope of practice, either in New Zealand or overseas,² with whom they have worked with for **at least six months continuously during the last three years;**
 - or
 - completing the *Foundations in Cultural Competency* course and competence assessment application³; and
- Provide the OTBNZ a standard supervisor's report six months after returning to practice in New Zealand when applying to remove the standard 'Return to Practice' condition on scope. The report must assess their competence across the seven competencies for registration. In addition, the supervisor must comment on the practitioner's knowledge and understanding of current legislation, practice area changes and related regulatory changes in the healthcare environment.

These practitioners will have the standard 'Return to Practice in New Zealand' condition placed on their scope of practice.

² The attesting occupational therapist must be registered/licensed if practising in a country or state with a registration/licensing authority and must provide a certified copy of his/her licence to practise.

³ Completion of the course and the competence assessment application are only required if the practitioner is unable to provide an attestation to their competence by an occupational therapist they have worked with.

N.B. Practitioners who are unable to provide an attestation to their competence from an occupational therapist with whom they have worked for at least six months continuously, will need to meet the requirements for Category 3 below, and will be subject to the 'Return to Practice in New Zealand' condition.

To apply for restoration to the Register and a practising certificate when providing an attestation of competence from an occupational therapist.
(Refer to the Notes below for additional guidance).

You will need to provide the following:

1. Online application for restoration to the Register (at www.otboard.org.nz)
2. Restoration to the Register fee
3. Practising certificate application and fee
4. Attestation to your competence from an occupational therapist with whom you have worked for six months continuously
5. Curriculum vitae
6. Three references → *submitted by the referees themselves*
7. Originals or correctly certified copies of:
 - a) birth certificate
 - b) personal details pages of passport or New Zealand drivers licence
 - c) legal evidence of name change (if applicable, e.g. marriage certificate)
 - d) the attesting occupational therapist's licence to practise (if he/she is registered in another country)
 - e) a certificate or letter of good standing or verification from every registering authority with which you have been registered – no older than six months when received by the OTBNZ
8. record of criminal convictions or a police certificate from every country in which you have lived since you last practised in NZ – no older than six months on receipt by the OTBNZ
9. Additional information (if applicable) on:
 - a) health issues
 - b) disciplinary issues
 - c) convictions

3. 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

These practitioners must demonstrate their competence to practise, and will have the standard 'Return to Practice in New Zealand' condition on their scope of practice. They are required to complete the online *Mauriora Foundation Course on Cultural Competency* (available at www.mauriora.co.nz), and submit a competence assessment application.

Applicants who satisfactorily meet the OTBNZ's competence requirements will be eligible for a practising certificate in the General Scope of Practice: Occupational Therapist, and will be subject to a standard condition on their scope of practice. (See below).

Condition on the scope of practice of some occupational therapists returning to practice in New Zealand

The scope of practice of some occupational therapists returning to practice in New Zealand is subject to the condition 'Return to Practice in New Zealand', and this will be noted on the practising certificate and the public Register. This condition requires that the practitioner receives fortnightly supervision for the first six months of practice. Sometimes the condition is personalised, depending on individual circumstances.

To apply for restoration to the Register and a practising certificate when submitting a written competence assessment application. (*Refer to the Notes below for additional guidance*).

You will need to provide the following:

1. Online application for restoration to the Register (at www.otboard.org.nz)
2. Restoration to the Register fee
3. Practising certificate application and fee
4. Certificate of completion of *Foundation Course in Cultural Competency*
5. Competence assessment application and fee:
 - a. Certificate of completion of [Foundations in Cultural Competency course](#);
 - b. Competence self-assessment forms; and [fee](#)
 - c. 3x [Employee/Supervisor/Referee References](#).

6. Curriculum vitae
7. Three references → *submitted by the referees themselves*;
8. Return to Practice Plan⁴ → if you have not practised in the last five years
9. Originals or correctly certified copies of:
 - a) birth certificate
 - b) personal details pages of passport or New Zealand drivers licence
 - c) legal evidence of name change (if applicable)
 - d) A certificate or letter of good standing or verification from every registering authority with which you have been registered – no older than six months when received by the OTBNZ
10. Record of criminal convictions or a police certificate from every country in which you have lived since you last practised in NZ – no older than six months on receipt by the OTBNZ
11. Additional information (if applicable) on:
 - a) health issues
 - b) disciplinary issues
 - c) convictions

NOTES

1. Fees and payments

A list of [fees and a Payment Form](#) are available on the OTBNZ website. The OTBNZ accepts payment in New Zealand dollars only. At present it is not possible for applicants to pay online - the following payment options are available:

- Personal cheque
- Bank cheque
- Visa or Mastercard credit cards or debit cards

If paying by credit card, applicants should provide payment details on the OTBNZ payment form on the OTBNZ website or in a covering letter stating:

- type of card
- name on card
- number
- expiry date
- amount you are authorising the OTBNZ to deduct

⁴ A Return to Practice Plan is required if the practitioner has not practised in NZ or overseas during the last five years.

2. Practising certificate application

This is included in the online registration application form.

An annual practising certificate costs NZ \$558.00 and a short term (three month) practising certificate costs NZ \$165.00

[Practising certificate application](#)

3. Attestation to your competence

[The Attestation of competence form](#) is available on OTBNZ website. This must be provided by an occupational therapist colleague with whom you have worked for at least six months continuously in the last three years. The attesting occupational therapist must provide a certified copy of their licence to practise (if they are registered in another country).

4. Mauriora Foundation Course on Cultural Competency

This is available at www.mauriora.co.nz. The OTBNZ requires individuals who successfully complete this course to submit a copy of their certificate of completion.

5 Competence assessment application

Before undertaking [the Competence Assessment Application form](#) applicants should complete the *Mauriora Foundation Course on Cultural Competency* and read and familiarise themselves with:

- [The Competencies for Registration and Continuing Practice](#) - this document outlines the performance criteria relevant to each of the competency areas
- [Code of Ethics](#) available on the OTBNZ website.

6. Employer/Supervisor/Referee Declaration

The Employer/Supervisor/Referee section of the competence assessment application should be completed by individuals who are familiar with an applicant's occupational therapy practice.

7. Curriculum Vitae (Resume)

Your curriculum vitae should provide information on your work history and experience.

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.

8 OTBNZ Reference form

The OTBNZ [Reference form](#) allows your referees to attest to your fitness for registration.

Who can complete reference forms?

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

How do I submit them?

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

9. Certified documents

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

- Sign the copy
- Print his/her name under the signature
- State his/her position or designation
- Endorse the copy with his/her official seal (where applicable)
- Provide his/her contact details/postal address to enable the OTBNZ to seek verification and

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.

10. Translations

Documents not written in English must be accompanied by an official translation, which must be on official translation service letterhead, and bear the appropriate signature or stamp, together with full address details. Refer The OTBNZ's [Requirements for Translating documents](#)

11. 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.

12. Record of criminal convictions/police certificate

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 from the time you last practised in NZ. 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 since you last practised in NZ.

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.

13. Return to practice plan

You return to practice plan should demonstrate to the OTBNZ that you have taken steps to ensure a successful and competent reintegration to the profession.

You should provide this plan if you:

- Have been out of the 'workforce' for 3+ years and gaps have been identified in their self-assessment, *and/or*
- Have been out of the occupational therapy profession for 5+ years

Typical objectives might include:

- *To be up to date with the knowledge of current occupational therapy theories and models of practice;*
- *Gain the theoretical and practical occupational therapy knowledge relevant to the area in which you intend to practise;*
- *To be up to date with relevant health legislation and systems to intended practice area;*
- *To identify professional development opportunities;*
- *To identify professional networks;*
- *Develop networks with the profession and find mentors;*
- *Identify learning needs and how these can be achieved.*

14. Additional information (if applicable) on:

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

APPLICATION TIMEFRAMES

Please send your complete application in one package. A complete application consists of:

- the appropriate fees
- all supporting documentation, excluding references, in the format required by the OTBNZ.

The practising certificate application process does not usually exceed four weeks in total - from the time the OTBNZ receives a complete application. However, it may take up to six weeks if you are required to provide a competence assessment application. This should be taken into account when making travel and employment plans.