

Policy for issuing practising certificates

In order to work as an occupational therapist in Aotearoa New Zealand, practitioners must be registered with the OTBNZ and hold a current practising certificate. Practising certificates may be issued to practitioners who hold current registration with the OTBNZ and meet the required standard of competence (s29(1)).

Applicants who have practised in New Zealand within the last 3 years

Practitioners who do not meet any of the criteria under HPCAA section 27(1) may be issued with a practising certificate when they have completed the following requirements:

- Completed an online application including self-declaration (appendix 1, questions for applicant)
- Received a valid third party attestation (appendix 2, questions for third party)
- Ensured personal data held by the OTBNZ is correct.
- Paid the required fee.

Information received which may suggest fitness, competence or other issues will be managed as a notification under the notification process.

Where a practitioner is holding a current practising certificate this is referred to as a renewal of practising certificate application process.

Applicants who have not practised in New Zealand within the last 3 years

Registered practitioners who have never practised in Aotearoa New Zealand, have not held a practising certificate in Aotearoa New Zealand within the last 3 years, or nor practiced in Aotearoa New Zealand within the last 3 years may be issued with a practising certificate when they have completed the following requirements:

- Completed an online application including self-declaration (appendix 1, questions for applicant)
- Met the competence requirements
- Have provided a police check/ consent for a police check within the last 3 years
- Ensure personal data held by the OTBNZ correct.

Practitioners in this category are not required to provide a third party attestation.

Third party attestation

The third party attests to a practitioner's competence and fitness to practise under the HPCAA. A third party must be a registered occupational therapist with a current practising certificate and no conditions or requirements on their scope of practice. They must be in a position to be able to attest, to the best of their knowledge, to the practitioner's competence and fitness to practice.

An attestation made by a third party is valid for a period of 90 days. If the attestation expires before the applicant submits their self-declaration and fee, the third party will need to submit a current attestation for the renewal application to be complete.

An occupational therapist who knowingly makes a false attestation for another practitioner may be subject to disciplinary action by the OTBNZ.

Issuing of practising certificates

An annual practising certificate will be valid for the length of the practising year: 1 April – 31 March. If an application is received after 1 April, the annual practising certificate will be valid from the date of its approval until 31 March the following year.

Practitioners may also apply for a short-term practising certificate, valid for a period of up to three months or 31 March, whichever occurs first.

The online record of the practising certificate will be considered the most current version of the practitioner's practising status and is visible publically on the OTBNZ register.

Deemed practising status

Under section 30 of the HPCA Act, if a complete renewal application is submitted by 31 March, and the practitioner holds a practising certificate expiring 31 March of that year, the practitioner will be treated as holding that practising certificate and therefore entitled to practise from 1 April. This is known as "deemed practising status". Deemed practising status applies when a practising certificate application has not yet been approved by the Registrar by 1 April, and continues in effect until either the date the renewal application is approved, or until the practitioner is notified by the Registrar that it will not be approved.

Where a practitioner has been practising without renewing their practising certificate for a period of less than 4 weeks, the policy for late renewal of annual practising certificate applications applies.

Practising certificate fees

The costs of an annual practising certificate are set by the OTBNZ under the HPCAA (s130(1)(c)) and published in the NZ gazette following consultation.

Fees are non-refundable

Decline of practising certificate

The OTBNZ may decline an application for a practising certificate where:

- The practitioner does not meet the criteria for issuing of a practising certificate
- The practitioner provides false or misleading information s27(3)
- The practitioner has not paid expenses listed under s26(4)

Any proposal to decline must be given to the practitioner in order to make a response.

The practitioner must be advised of the option for review of the Registrar's decision to decline a practising certificate.

Delegations

Applications for practising certificates are made under delegation to the Registrar from the OTBNZ Board.

Power	Relevant HPCAA Section	Delegation from	Delegation to
Receive and assess applications for annual practising certificates	s26-27	Board	Registrar
Issue annual practising certificates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provided that any issue is in accordance with Board policy; and under s27(1)(d) provided that they are in accordance with Board policy; and provided that other than in the circumstances described in (e) below, none of the grounds set out in s27(1)(a), (b), (c) (e) or (f) apply; 	s27	Registrar	Registrar and Registration staff
Issue annual practising certificates in circumstances where a practitioner has applied for a practising certificate, and where it is known that the practitioner has practised without a practising certificate for 4 weeks or less since the expiry of the last practising certificate	s27(1)(f)	Board	Registrar

Policy reviewed	Feb 2015, Oct 2020
Policy Review due	October 2022

Appendix 1

Practising certificate questions

Green indicates Pathway for automated approval

	Yes	No
Are you currently practising as an occupational therapist?		
Have you received or have pending any criminal convictions since your last declaration to the OTBNZ?	Further information	
Are you facing any competency or disciplinary issues since your last declaration to the OTBNZ?	Further information	
Do you have any physical or mental health condition/s that may affect your ability to practice that the OTBNZ is not already aware of?	Further information	
Do you agree to engage in your ePortfolio in order to demonstrate your continuing competence to practice?		
Do you agree to engage with your ePortfolio supervisor and your third party?		
I declare that I have personally completed this application on XXXX, and all statements by me on this form are true and accurate in every particular.		

Appendix 2

Third Party declarations

	True/yes	False/No
Have you sighted and discussed the practitioner's ePortfolio with them?:		
Are you satisfied that the professional development in the ePortfolio is appropriate for the practitioners level of experience and is suitable to maintain their competence?:		Further information
I confirm to the best of my knowledge, that the practitioner is not subject to any investigation or pending action, as a result of competence or conduct concerns?:		Further information
I confirm, to the best of my knowledge, that the practitioner does not have a health condition which may impact on their fitness to practice:		Further information
Do you consider that the practitioner is competent to practice?:		Further information
I declare that I have personally completed this declaration on XX-XX-XXXX, and all statements made by me on this form are true and correct in every particular:		