

INFORMATION ABOUT REGISTERING AS A PSYCHOLOGIST IN NEW ZEALAND

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Introduction

The New Zealand Psychologists Board administers the registration of psychologists under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (HPCA Act). This legislation provides for:

- the registration of, and practising certificates for, health practitioners; and
- standards of competence, fitness to practise and quality assurance measures for health practitioners;
- complaints and discipline procedures and the establishment of the Health Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal;
- appeals processes, including rights of appeal for health practitioners; and
- the structures and administration of authorities.

It is recommended by the Board that those seeking registration as a psychologist in New Zealand purchase a copy of the HPCA Act to familiarise themselves with this legislation and for future reference. The HPCA Act can be purchased from Bennetts Government Bookshops or from Brookers (phone 0800 10 60 60).

Qualifications for Registration

(1) The "Psychologist" Scope of Practice

The following qualifications are prescribed for registration as a psychologist in the general scope of practice:

A minimum of a Masters degree in psychology from an accredited¹ educational organisation, or an equivalent qualification. Eligibility for a general scope of practice requires a Board approved practicum or internship involving 1500 hours of supervised practice.

¹ "Accredited" and in subsequent references means accreditation of the educational organisation, or an educational course, by the New Zealand Psychologists Board for the purpose of registering psychologists.

"Trainee Psychologist" Scope of Practice

This registration is for candidates who have completed formal academic qualifications that have provided the trainee psychologist with the foundation competencies required for safe practice in the approved supervised setting, and who are entering Board approved supervised practice for the purpose of achieving full registration.

This option is only available to employees of the New Zealand Defence Force and Child Youth & Family Services, which may provide supervision leading to registration. For more information about supervision leading to registration, contact the Deputy Registrar (Registrations) – Mr Bill King (see contact details below).

"Intern Psychologist" Scope of Practice

The Intern Psychologist is enrolled in a Post Graduate Diploma or Doctorate course in psychology at a Board accredited university and is undertaking internships where they will be working with the public. The Intern Psychologist will hold an Interim Practising Certificate (IPC) with supervision conditions.

(2) "Educational Psychologist" Vocational Scope of Practice

The following qualifications have been prescribed for registration as a psychologist in the educational vocational scope of practice:

A minimum of a Masters degree in psychology[∇] from an accredited¹ educational organisation and an accredited Postgraduate Diploma in Educational Psychology, or equivalent qualification. Eligibility for an educational scope of practice shall require a Board approved practicum or internship involving 1500 hours of supervised practice.

¹ "Accredited" and in subsequent references means accreditation of the educational organisation, or an educational course, by the New Zealand Psychologists Board for the purpose of registering psychologists.

(3) "Clinical Psychologist" Vocational Scope of Practice

The following qualifications have been prescribed for registration as a psychologist in the clinical vocational scope of practice:

A minimum of a Masters degree in psychology from an accredited¹ educational organisation and an accredited Postgraduate Diploma in Clinical Psychology, or equivalent qualification. Eligibility for a clinical scope of practice shall require a Board approved practicum or internship involving 1500 hours of supervised practice.

¹ "Accredited" and in subsequent references means accreditation of the educational organisation, or an educational course, by the New Zealand Psychologists Board for the purpose of registering psychologists.

Scopes of Practice Definitions

There are 5 scopes of practice prescribed for registered psychologists in New Zealand. All psychologists must qualify for the "Psychologist" scope of practice on registration. Applicants may apply at the time of registration, or at any time after registration, for a vocational scope of practice. Refer to the applications for registration information page on the Psychologists Board website.

[∇] A Masters degree in education may be considered equivalent to a masters degree in psychology where its content is sufficiently educational in nature.

A copy of the scopes of practice and prescribed qualifications document is available in PDF format for your information from the Board website homepage.

(1) "Psychologist"

The following definition is for the "Psychologist" scope of practice:

A psychologist within this general scope is defined as rendering or offering to render or offering to render to individuals, groups, organisations or the public any psychological service involving the application of psychological knowledge, principles, methods and procedures of understanding, predicting ameliorating or influencing behaviour, affect or cognition. Such practice is undertaken within an individual's area and level of expertise and with due regard to ethical, legal, and Board-prescribed standards.

(2-3) "Trainee Psychologist" or "Intern Psychologist"

A "Trainee Psychologist" or "Intern Psychologist" scope of practice may be granted to applicants:

- who have completed formal academic qualifications that have provided the trainee psychologist with the foundation competencies required for safe practice in the approved supervised setting, and
- who are entering Board approved² supervised practice for the purpose of achieving full registration.

²Includes Supervision 2000 Scheme and Board accredited training programmes, e.g. students of Post Graduate Diploma programmes whilst enrolled in their final year.

(4) "Educational Psychologist"

The following definition is for the vocational scope of practice "Educational Psychologist"

Educational Psychologists apply psychological knowledge and theory derived from research to the area of learning and development, to assist children, young persons, adults and their families regarding their learning, academic performance, behavioural, social and emotional development, by using psychological and educational assessments and applying interventions using systemic, ecological and developmental approaches. Such practice is undertaken within an individual's area and level of expertise and with due regard to ethical, legal, and Board-prescribed standards.

(5) "Clinical Psychologist"

The following definition is for the vocational scope of practice "Clinical Psychologist"

Clinical Psychologists apply psychological knowledge and theory derived from research to the area of mental health and development, to assist children, young persons, adults and their families with emotional, mental, developmental or behavioural problems by using psychological assessment, formulation and diagnosis based on biological, social and psychological factors, and applying therapeutic interventions using a scientist-practitioner approach. Such practice is undertaken within an individual's area and level of expertise and with due regard to ethical, legal, and Board-prescribed standards.

Processing Applications

A checklist of documents required with your Application for Registration is on the application form. All required documentation and the correct fee must be received before the application can be processed. The Board is unable to process incomplete applications and cannot accept uncertified copies of any official documents.

The Board's will endeavour to acknowledge (by email, if provided) receipt of your application form and documentation within 14 days of receipt in the Board's office. You need to allow 6-8 weeks for the assessment of your application from the date of acknowledgment of receipt. Complete applications are processed on a regular basis. In fairness to all practitioners, no application will be 'fast tracked' ahead of any other.

Overseas Applicants

The Psychologists Board will assess each overseas application on an individual basis, assessing the equivalence of the applicant's qualifications to New Zealand qualifications. For this reason, overseas applicants should allow longer for the assessment of their registration applications.

In order to assist in the accurate assessment of qualifications, overseas applicants should supply to the Board as much information as possible about the course content of their degrees/diplomas. Information relating to any internships or practicums undertaken as part of a university degree/diploma is particularly relevant.

Character and Reputation of Applicant

Character References - The HPCA Act requires that the person is of good character and reputation and is a fit and proper person to be registered. References will be required to ensure this is the case. At least one reference must be written by a psychologist registered by the New Zealand Psychologists Board. (For overseas applicants who do not know a New Zealand Registered Psychologist who could supply a reference, a reference from a senior psychologist who is registered, chartered or licensed with a professional body overseas will be an acceptable alternative. A certified copy of that referee's registration certificate or licence must be included with the character reference letter).

All character references must be signed and dated no earlier than 3 months before the date on the application form.

Record of Criminal Conviction(s) - NZ Applicants: The Board requires that every NZ applicant seek from the Ministry of Justice, a *Record of Criminal Convictions*. This lists only convictions and sentencing from court appearances and does not include Youth Court charges. An application form for your Record of Criminal Convictions can be obtained from your local District Court. Alternatively download a copy from the Ministry of Justice website: <http://www.courts.govt.nz/privacy/> or contact The Privacy Unit, Ministry of Justice, National Office, PO Box 2750, Wellington, Telephone 04 91-888-00. **Do not send your Record of Criminal Convictions directly to the Board. You should view it before sending it to the Board with your application.**

Record of Criminal Conviction(s) - Overseas Applicants: The Board requires that you provide a record of criminal convictions, e.g. Police Clearance Certificate (SA), FBI Criminal Conviction Information/Fingerprint Information (USA), NIS Criminal Record Information Certificate (UK), or equivalent form to inform the Board about any convictions you may have had in your country(ies) of residence.

NOTE: A conviction does not necessarily preclude the granting of registration. Any convictions will be considered by the Board on a case-by-case basis. If you have a conviction, you should consider sending an explanatory letter about the conviction to the Board to accompany the record.

Annual Practising Certificates

Registration by itself does not permit a registered psychologist to practise. To be able to practise in New Zealand after registration has been formally approved, you are required to hold an Annual Practising Certificate valid for that year. This certificate is renewable at 1 April each year. An invoice will be sent as a reminder. In New Zealand, it is illegal to practise as a registered psychologist without a practising certificate. Reminder notices will be sent to registered psychologists prior to the expiry date each year.

Communication Skills

If English is not your first language, and your qualifications were not completed in the English language please provide a notarised copy, or the original, of your results of an IELTS test. The Board may also require you to meet a person to seek further evidence of your English communication abilities.

The English test currently approved by the Board is the International Language Testing System (IELTS Academic Module)

Minimum pass marks are 7.5 on the IELTS (i.e. no less than 7 in each band) and, and a score of 570 (230 for computer based) on the TOEFL, including grades of 50 for the Test of Spoken English (TSE) and 4.5 for the Test of Written English (TWE).

Fees

Application for Registration

1. For a New Zealand qualified psychologist the fee is \$NZ375.00.
2. For registration under the Trans Tasman Mutual Recognition Act 1997 the fee is \$NZ375.00.
3. For an overseas trained psychologist the fee is \$NZ650.00.
4. For a non-binding assessment of your qualifications for registration is \$NZ50.00.

The application fee **must be** enclosed with the application form and supporting documentation. **The fee is not refundable whatever the outcome of the application.** New Zealand applicants may send a personal cheque, a bank cheque, or pay by MasterCard or Visa credit cards. Overseas applicants must send a bank draft or pay by MasterCard or Visa credit cards. Cheques and bank drafts should be made out to the "Psychologists Board".

Certificate of Registration

A formal Certificate of Registration may be obtained on payment of a fee of NZ\$75.00 after registration is approved by the Board. You can pay by downloading the Certificate of Registration Payment Form and sending it into the Board with your \$NZ75.00 payment. Certificates are produced on A4 card quality paper personally signed by the Board Registrar and ready for framing.

Annual Practising Certificate (APC) and Interim Practising Certificate (IPC)

The fee for both the Annual Practising Certificate and Interim Practising Certificate is \$NZ595.00. This must be purchased after the Board has approved registration if you intend to practise in New Zealand. The APC fee is payable each year whether you work as a psychologist for entire year or only a part of it.

The APC fee is reduced to NZ\$297.50 for persons first registered by the Board on or after 1 October in that practise year (1 April to 31 March inclusive).

New Zealand Psychologists Board Contact Details

Street Address: Level 9
Tourism & Travel House
79 Boulcott Street
Wellington 6011
New Zealand

Postal Address: PO Box 10-626
Wellington 6143
New Zealand

Contact Person: Mr Bill King
Deputy Registrar (Registrations)
Email: Bill.King@nzpb.org.nz