



**MEDICAL SCIENCES COUNCIL  
OF NEW ZEALAND**

TE KAUNIHERA PŪTAIAO HAUORA O AOTEAROA

## **Policy and guidelines**

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Supervision for Anaesthetic Technicians  
new or returning to practice in Aotearoa  
New Zealand

July 2024

<b>Policy title</b>	
<b>Reference number</b>	
<b>Scope</b>	This policy applies to Anaesthetic Technician practitioners who have not yet, or not recently, practised in Aotearoa New Zealand

<b>Associated policy documents</b>	
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# Policy overview

## Supervision for practice in Aotearoa New Zealand

The supervision into practice in Aotearoa New Zealand recertification programme is applicable to new registrants (new graduates) and for registrants who are new to practice or returning to practice in Aotearoa New Zealand.

### Definitions

**New graduate** – a person who has successfully completed a programme of study in Aotearoa New Zealand, allowing registration as an Anaesthetic Technician (AT). The programme being accredited by Te Kaunihera Pūtaiao Hauora O Aotearoa | The Medical Sciences Council (the Council).

**New to practice** – a person who has successfully completed a programme of study in an overseas jurisdiction and is appropriately qualified, competent, fit, and eligible to register with the Council as an anaesthetic technician but has not yet practised in Aotearoa New Zealand.

**Return to practice** – a person who is or has been registered as an AT in Aotearoa New Zealand but has not practised in the last three years and is appropriately qualified, competent, fit, and eligible to register/or obtain a practising certificate with the Council.

**Supervision** - is a formal process of professional support and teaching to enable the practitioner to build on their knowledge, skills, and professional attributes, and to progressively assume responsibility for their own practice.

### Background

The principal purpose of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (the Act) is to protect the health and safety of the public by ensuring health practitioners are competent and fit to practise. Under section 118 of the Act, the Council is responsible for ensuring new graduates and those new or returning to practice in Aotearoa New Zealand are competent and fit to practise. The Council can set programmes to ensure the ongoing competence of health practitioners (section 118(e)).

### Purpose

Section 41 of the Act authorises the Council to set recertification programmes for registered ATs for the purpose of ensuring they are competent to practise.

The recertification programme for new ATs (new graduates), and for those new or returning to practice, is intended to:

- a) ensure these practitioners commence work with sufficient support, not only for the practitioners' benefit, but also for the protection of the public
- b) orientate the practitioner to practice in Aotearoa New Zealand.

## Practitioners who will be required to complete a recertification programme

This recertification programme will apply to all new or returning registrants. This includes:

- a. Aotearoa New Zealand graduates registering for the first time in Aotearoa New Zealand
- b. all internationally educated practitioners registering and beginning practice in Aotearoa New Zealand for the first time – regardless of their pathway to registration
- c. any other practitioner registering in Aotearoa New Zealand for the first time (eg Aotearoa New Zealand educated, but has been practising overseas immediately after completing education without registering here)
- d. practitioners who have retained registration but are applying for a practising certificate for the first time after more than three years
- e. practitioners who have been restored to the Register under section 145 of the Act.

## New Zealand graduates: Recertification programme requirements – supervision into practice in Aotearoa New Zealand

Recent and non-recent Aotearoa New Zealand graduates are required to undergo supervision for at least two hours per week for the first six months of practice. This may be extended for a further period if needed.

After six months of practice, the supervisor may have sufficient confidence in the practitioner's ability to practise without supervision, to recommend completion of the recertification programme.

This requirement is distinct from any personalised supervision conditions put into place by the Council as a response to specific competence, conduct or fitness concerns.

It is also separate to any workplace orientation programmes that may be in place.

## New or returning to practice in Aotearoa New Zealand: Recertification programme requirements – supervision into practice in Aotearoa New Zealand

All other categories of practitioner listed in bullets **b-e** above must undergo supervision for at least one hour per week for the first six months of practice. This may be extended for a further period if needed.

After six months of practice, the supervisor may have sufficient confidence in the practitioner's ability to practise without supervision, to recommend completion of the recertification programme.

This requirement is distinct from any personalised supervision conditions put into place by the Council as a response to specific competence, conduct or fitness concerns.

It is also separate to any workplace orientation programmes that may be in place.

## Practitioners who work part-time

Practitioners who work part-time, or who, during supervision, reduce their hours to part-time and/or take a break in employment of more than four weeks, must notify the Council. They must also advise the Council of when full time equivalence (based on hours of practice completed) will be achieved. The Council will update its records and the due date for expected completion accordingly.

## The supervisor

The supervisor must be an Aotearoa New Zealand registered AT with a current practising certificate, in good standing, have no conditions on their own scope of practice and not be taking part in the recertification programme.

Supervisors must have sufficient experience of practice in Aotearoa New Zealand to be able to act in the role of supervisor.

Supervisors and those being supervised must review **Appendix I** for more information about the Council's expectations for supervision.

## End of recertification programme – all registrant types

At the end of the required supervision period, the practitioner will need to submit the following documentation to confirm successful completion of the recertification programme:

- a. Completion of recertification programme form
- b. Record of supervision sessions

The documents will be reviewed by the Council, and the practitioner will be advised of the outcome within 20 working days. Supervision must continue until the application is approved by the Council.

## Early completion of the recertification programme

In some cases, the supervisor may believe early completion of the recertification programme is appropriate. In this case the supervisor may make a professional judgement that the practitioner may safely practice without supervision, and submit the documentation required above with an accompanying explanation. Supervision must continue until the application is approved by the Council.

## Reminders

To assist practitioners, the Council will send:

- a. a reminder to the practitioner six weeks prior to the expected completion date and, if necessary
- b. a second reminder six weeks after the expected completion date.

## Unsatisfactory results of the recertification programme

Unsatisfactory results of the recertification programme may include, but are not limited to:

1. non-compliance with supervision requirements

2. failure to maintain a supervision meeting log
3. identification, by the supervisor, of concerns related to the practitioner's practice that, in the supervisor's opinion, cannot be addressed through the supervision process
4. failure to submit the appropriate completion of recertification form and supporting documents within the specified timeframe.

Under section 43 of the [Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act](#), if a practitioner does not satisfy the requirements of a recertification programme, the Council may make either of the following orders (under section 43(1)):

- a. That the practitioner's scope of practice be altered by –
  - i. changing any health services that the practitioner is permitted to perform or
  - ii. including any condition or conditions that the Council considers appropriate.
- b. That the practitioner's registration be suspended.

If the Council proposes to make an order under 43(1), the Council will provide the practitioner with a notice stating:

- a. why the Council proposes to make the order and
- b. that the practitioner has a reasonable opportunity to make written submissions, and to be heard on the matter, either personally or by a representative.

Orders made under 43(1) remain in effect until the practitioner has satisfied all the requirements. The Council may, on the application of the practitioner, extend the period within which the practitioner is required to satisfy those requirements.

## Failure to submit evidence of completion

Practitioners must submit the appropriate form and accompanying documents within two months, following the expected completion date of their recertification programme, or contact the Council to request an extension. Failure to do so will automatically result in the Council considering its options under section 43 of the Act.

All practitioners are welcome to contact the Council staff should they require more information.

# Appendix I

## Council expectations for supervision

Supervision is a formal process of professional support. It's used to enable the practitioner to build on their knowledge, skills and professional attributes, and to progressively assume responsibility for their own practice. Supervision is not a punitive process and is utilised by the Council in a high trust model. The Council trusts that the supervision that practitioners provide and receive is competent, adheres to the Council's requirements and is safe for the practitioner. It is not seen as overseeing or managerial oversight instigated by the employer.

1. Supervision is to be provided in accordance with the Council's requirements. This includes:
  - confirmation of any specific requirements that apply to the practitioner.
  - ensuring a log of the supervision sessions provided is kept
  - use of the current forms and templates provided by the Council
  - completion of the appropriate form at the end of the recertification programme.
2. Supervision is expected to include discussion and explanation of:
  - Competence Standards for Anaesthetic Technicians in Aotearoa New Zealand
  - the Code of Ethical Conduct
  - the Cultural Competence Standards
  - any additional guidance and advice issued by the Council, including its implications for practice.
3. Supervisors are required to report concerns related to the competence, conduct or fitness to practice of the practitioner to the Council during the supervision period.
4. The supervisor should also ensure that the practitioner is familiar with the context of practice in Aotearoa New Zealand. This should include:
  - the significance of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in Aotearoa New Zealand and the responsibilities of respective treaty partners
  - the health system – Te Whatu Ora | Health New Zealand, Manatū Hauora | Ministry of Health, Pharmac
  - the structure of regional and provincial health services
  - The code of Consumer Rights and the Health and Disability Commission
  - the legislative environment – Health Practitioner's Competence Assurance Act 2005, Privacy Act 2020, Medicines Act 1981 Medicines Regulations 1984, Misuse of Drugs Act and Regulations and other applicable legislation, Vulnerable Persons/Childrens, Pae Ora
  - Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC),
  - the role of health practitioners in supporting equitable health outcomes
  - explaining and assisting in meeting continued professional development expectations.
5. The supervisor must be aware of the imbalance in power that exists in a supervisory relationship and seek to mitigate this wherever possible.