

Policy

Anaesthetic Technician Return to Practice

Effective 1 Nov 2025

Policy Title	AT Return to Practice Policy
Reference Number	20251101 AT-Return to Practice
Scope	This policy applies to all anaesthetic technician practitioners registered with the Medical Sciences Council looking to return to practise in Aotearoa New Zealand

Associated Policy Documents	
Anaesthetic Technician Scope of Practice	Notice-of-Scope-of-Practice-and-Prescribed-Qualifications-for-the-practice-of-Anaesthetic-Technology.pdf
Anaesthetic Technician Registration Policy	2025-Mar-AT-Registration-Policy.pdf
English Language Proficiency	2021-May-English-Language-Policy.pdf
New Graduate Recertification (Supervision)	2025-Jan-AT-New-Graduate-Recertification-Supervision-Policy.pdf
Supervision as a Condition for Anaesthetic Technicians	2025-Jan-AT-Supervision-as-a-Condition-Policy.pdf
Recertification Programme for Internationally Qualified Anaesthetic Technicians	20251101-Recertification-for-Internationally-Qualified-Anaesthetic-Technicians.pdf

Revision Schedule			
Version Number	Version Date	Approved By	Next Review
One	2014	Medical Sciences Council	2016
Two	June 2019	Medical Sciences Council	2021
Three	April 2021	Chief Executive	2023
Four	August 2022	Medical Sciences Council	2024
Five	October 2025	Medical Sciences Council	2027

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Policy overview

1. This policy sets out the Medical Sciences Council (the Council's) return to practice requirements for registered anaesthetic technicians, in accordance with the [Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003](#) (the Act).
2. Under [Section 27](#) of the Act, the Council may decline to issue a practising certificate (APC) if the practitioner has not held a practising certificate of a kind sought by the application within the three years immediately preceding the date of the application.
3. [Section 29](#) enables the Council to consider what conditions it may impose or vary before issuing a practising certificate.

Definitions

4. The Council defines return to practice as occurring when a practitioner has not held an Aotearoa New Zealand practising certificate as an anaesthetic technician within the three years prior to the application for a practising certificate or has not practised as an anaesthetic technician within the last three years.
5. Practice is defined as any aspect of healthcare where a practitioner uses their professional knowledge and skills to impact directly or indirectly the care of others. For example, this can include education, research, regulation and management as described in the scope of practice.

Policy

6. The following practitioners must meet the Council's return to practice requirements, demonstrating their competence and fitness to practise safely in Aotearoa New Zealand:
 - a. Practitioners who have not practised as an anaesthetic technician for more than three years immediately preceding the date of their application; or
 - b. Practitioners who have practised outside of Aotearoa New Zealand for more than three years since they were registered or last held a practising certificate in the relevant scope (whichever is most recent); or
 - c. Practitioners who have not held a practising certificate since they were first registered/graduated in Aotearoa New Zealand, and it has been more than three years since registration/graduation.

7. Practitioners returning to practice after a break of less than three years must adhere to the requirements set out in the Practising Certificate policy.

Practising certificate

8. The issue of a practising certificate requires registered practitioners to provide evidence they are competent to practise within the relevant scope.
9. The scope of practice, as articulated in the current Gazette Notice, provides the broad parameters of the practice of an anaesthetic technician.
10. The Council's Competence Standards for Anaesthetic Technicians in Aotearoa New Zealand 2025 provide the detail of how registered practitioners are expected to practise and what they must be capable of doing. The competence standards set the minimum threshold required of entry-level practitioners.
11. To ensure public safety, as a minimum, practitioners applying for a practising certificate must be able to work at the level expected of an entry-level practitioner and be able to demonstrate they meet all the competence standards for the anaesthetic technician scope of practice.

Information requirements

12. Where a practitioner has not practised in Aotearoa New Zealand for more than three years, they will need to complete the following requirements set by the Council to ensure their competence and fitness to practise.

Return to practice documentation requirements

13. The following document requirements are required from all practitioners seeking to return to practice. All documents must be in the form specified by the Council:
 - a. CV/resume
 - b. Two written professional references
 - c. A return to practice plan. This should detail the activities and education that the practitioner has completed to prepare for returning to practice in Aotearoa New Zealand.
 - d. Evidence of any relevant professional development activities that have been completed
 - e. Provide a criminal conviction history check from each country the practitioner has lived in for more than 12-months since they last held a practising certificate
 - f. Consent to a Aotearoa New Zealand Ministry of Justice criminal conviction check

- g. Evidence of good standing from any regulatory or professional body they have been practising under since they last held a practising certificate (including any other New Zealand responsible authority).

Demonstration of competence

14. Practitioners returning to practice must provide evidence that they are competent to resume practising in their registered scope of practice. This evidence may include one or more of the following requirements:
 - a. providing evidence of relevant experience working in the anaesthetic technology profession (eg, overseas employment)
 - b. a successful pass in the Council examination
 - c. providing evidence of relevant continued professional development
 - d. successful completion of a Council-approved competence assessment
 - e. Completion of further education.
15. The specific requirements are personalised based on the time away from practice, the activities completed during the time away from practice and any other relevant factors.
16. Where a practitioner may require support to practice safely a personalized plan may be developed as described below.

Requirements for issue of a practising certificate

17. The Council may declare that the practitioner engages with specific requirements as part of issuing of a practising certificate, for example as a condition or completing a recertification programme.
18. These requirements may include one or more of:
 - a. A period of supervised practice
 - b. Completion of education to support returning to practice in NZ
 - c. Other requirements as determined by the Council.
19. Any pre-existing requirements imposed prior to the return to practice application (such as a condition or recertification programme) will be reviewed to ensure they are appropriate for the circumstances.

Supervision

20. Practitioners may be required to complete a period of supervised practice as a condition of their return to practice.
21. The supervisor must be a registered health practitioner (under the HPCA Act 2003) with the Council, be in the same profession as the practitioner, hold a current practising certificate issued by the Council and be in good standing.
22. Where supervision is applied as a condition, practitioners must adhere to the Supervision as a Condition for Anaesthetic Technicians policy.
23. The level of supervision may be incrementally reduced after the initial minimum period of supervision as mutually agreed by the nominated supervisor and the practitioner returning-to-practice.
24. At the end of the period of supervised practice, the supervisor must provide a report to the Council recommending the end of the supervision period as the practitioner can now practice safely independently.
25. The practitioner and nominated supervisor must meet all reporting requirements as specified by the Council.

Education

26. The Council may require that the practitioner complete relevant education that includes specific topics to support safe practice. The practitioner must provide evidence of completion within the specified timeframe.

Conditions

27. Where there is a specific concern, the Council may apply a personalised condition to the practitioner to ensure the protection of the public.

Recertification programme

28. The Council routinely requires practitioners returning to practice to complete the requirement for supervision and education as part of a recertification programme.
29. Details of the recertification programme requirements for Anaesthetic Technicians can be found on the Council's website.

30. Practitioners who have not held a practising certificate since they were first registered/graduated in Aotearoa New Zealand, and it has been more than three years since registration/graduation may also be required to complete the requirements of the New Graduate recertification programme.

Return to practice requirements summary

Return to Practice			
Return to practice category	Return to practice docs	International docs	Further support
Has not held an APC in the scope for more than three years	• CV/resume • Two written professional references • Return to practice plan • Relevant CPD • Criminal conviction history check		• Personalised support based on circumstances: • Recertification programme
Has not held an APC in the scope for more than three years, and has practised overseas during this time	• CV/resume • Two written professional references • Return to practice plan • Relevant CPD • Criminal conviction history check	• Criminal conviction history check from each country lived in more than 12 months • Certificate of Good standing from each regulatory or professional body practised with	• Personalised support based on circumstances: • Recertification programme
Has never held an APC in the scope	• CV/resume • Two written professional references • Return to practice plan • Relevant CPD • Criminal conviction history check	• Criminal conviction history check from each country (where required)	• Personalised support based on circumstances: • New graduate recertification programme. • Greater level of scrutiny required