

National Midwifery Examination Policy for New Zealand Graduates

Refers to the following key legislation:

- Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003.

And refers to the following Midwifery Council information:

- New Zealand graduates' registration policy
- New Zealand graduates' application information on the Midwifery Council website
- The Competencies for Entry to the Register of Midwives
- Standards for approval of pre-registration midwifery education programmes and accreditation of tertiary education organisations (3rd edition) December 2019.

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Policy statement

All New Zealand qualified applicants for registration as a midwife are required to pass a professional entry examination as prescribed by the Midwifery Council (the Council) in accordance with section 12 of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (HPCAA). International applicants for registration may be directed to sit the examination as part of their application process.

The examination is set at the level of competence for entry to the Register and seeks to assess graduates' assessment skills and professional judgment in relation to midwifery practice across the scope. The examination seeks to assess the ability of graduates to identify when pregnancy and childbirth are no longer within normal limits and to carry out appropriate midwifery actions. This includes knowledge and midwifery actions in relation to collaborative care with other health professionals.

1 Examination structure and delivery

1.1 Delivery

- a. The National Midwifery Examination (the examination) is an on-line format, delivered by a third-party host
- b. Candidates will be given three (3) hours to complete the examination, there is no additional reading time.

1.2 Content

- a. The examination will entirely consist of a series of multiple-choice questions randomised and selected from a larger bank of pre-designed questions. The exam structure has been approved by the New Zealand Midwifery Examination Group on behalf of the Midwifery Council (the Council)
- b. Copies of examination questions will not be made available for students or midwifery educators
- c. The examination content will cover the theoretical and clinical knowledge required to provide effective and safe midwifery care across the Midwifery Scope of Practice, including knowledge of when involvement of other health professionals is required
- d. In order, to pass the examination an overall mark of 70% and a mark of 70% in the sub-set of questions relating to safety must be attained.

1.3 Times and venues

- a. The on-line examinations are held on premises managed and staffed by the third-party host, using secure and approved devices. Candidates are not able to access the online examination from any other location or device
- b. Eligible candidates for the examination as outlined in section 2 of this policy will make arrangements with the third-party host

- regarding booking an approved date, time, and location to sit the examination
- c. To manage large cohorts of applicants most examination dates are scheduled for December, March and July of each year.

2 Eligibility to sit the examination

Only eligible candidates may sit the examination.

Aotearoa, New Zealand applicants

2.1 Applications to sit the examination

- a. Any candidate who intends to sit the examination must also be seeking registration with the Council, including making payment of the Registration fees as posted in the New Zealand Gazette
- b. No applicant for registration may sit the exam within ten days of the successful completion of their programme of education
- c. Each candidate for the examination must use the same identity document to apply for registration with the Council. The same document must also be shown at the time of sitting the exam:
 - I. Only a passport or a New Zealand drivers' licence may be used as the identity document.

2.2 Completion of the prescribed qualification and requirements

- a. Any candidate who intends to sit the examination must have first successfully completed all the requirements of an approved programme of education within the time frame as specified by the Council:
 - I. Successful completion includes all components of the programme of education, including the required clinical hours, placements and numbers of required clinical assessments
 - II. Where a candidate has booked to sit the examination on the presumption of having attained the required clinical practice, but subsequently fails to reach that requirement, the Council will advise the third-party host to defer the booking until the requirements have been met.

2.3 Confirmations from Heads of Midwifery Schools

- a. At least twenty (20) business days prior to the scheduled end of the programme of education, each Head of School of Midwifery must provide the Council with written confirmation that the student will have completed the pre-registration programme within the specified time by the date of the examination.
- b. At least five (5) working days before the date of the examination, each Head of School of Midwifery must:

- I. certify that the candidate has successfully completed all components of the Bachelor of Midwifery programme within the specified time,
 - II. certify that the candidate meets the Competencies for Entry to the Register,
 - III. certify that the candidate is a fit and proper person to be entered on to the Register of Midwives.
- c. When a student fails a final paper, the relevant Head of Midwifery School must advise the Council to withdraw that student from the examination:
- I. This must be done no later than ten (10) days prior to the day of the booked examination.
- d. Within five (5) working days after the candidate has sat the examination, each Head of Midwifery School must send to the Council a full transcript of the candidate's programme of education, showing confirmation that all the requirements have been completed and passed.

International Applicants for registration

- a. International applicants will be advised that they are required to sit the examination as part of their application for registration.

2.4 Special considerations all candidates

- a. No considerations are given by Council for candidates with temporary medical conditions or injuries.
- b. Special assessment conditions may be approved by the Council for candidates who have a proven and demonstrated learning disability that impacts directly upon their ability to fairly demonstrate in assessment conditions their knowledge of the midwifery course material, but which do not provide an unfair advantage over other candidates nor compromises their ability to achieve registration as a midwife:
 - I. Evidence of the learning disability must be established by a report no more than three years old from a registered educational psychologist recommending special assessment conditions to address the candidate's specific learning needs.
 - II. Such a request must be made by the student to the Council at least twenty (20) business days prior to the scheduled end of the programme of education, and must be accompanied by:
 - 1) a letter from the candidate outlining the special assessment condition requested and why,
 - 2) a letter of support from the Head of School including evidence of reduced allowance of time as outlined in section 2.4 c of this policy,
 - 3) a copy of the report from a registered educational psychologist as outlined in section 2.4 bi of this policy

- 4) permission from the candidate for the Council to contact and consult with anyone in relation to the application relating to any information contained in the application or verification of past learning and results.
- c. It is expected that schools will implement a process of reducing extra time allowances over the three years of study and work towards a candidate not requiring additional time in the examination. This process should be evident in any letter of support requesting extra time
- d. Any provision of extra time is up to an additional thirty minutes on top of the three-hour examination timeframe
- e. The decision of the Council is final and there is no right of appeal, the decision will be communicated in writing to the address supplied by the candidate:
 - l. The school and the third-party host will also be informed of the Council's decision.

3 Sitting the examination – all candidates

- a. Candidates who are unwell or incapacitated on the day of the examination will need to advise the third-party host and follow their processes for medical documentation, exam date deferment and payment transfer
- b. Candidates wishing to defer their examination will need to arrange this with the third-party host, as outlined in section 1.3 b of this policy:
 - l. Candidates should be aware that this may mean forfeiture of all or part of the examination fee paid to the third-party host.
- c. Candidates must be present at the allocated examination venue by the specified time, failure to do so will result in the candidate being prevented from entering and sitting the examination at that time
- d. Upon entry to the examination venue candidates must provide the approved identity document outlined in section 2.1 b of this policy, failure to do so will result in the candidate being prevented from entering and sitting the examination at that time
- e. Candidates with medications that may be required during the examination should place them in a clear plastic bag, clearly named, and given to the examination supervisor upon entry to the venue
- f. At the examination venue candidates must comply with all reasonable instructions given by the third-party host, failure to do so may result in the candidate being asked to leave the venue and an automatic failure of the examination
- g. Such reasonable requests may include:
 - 1) what materials may or may not be taken into the examination venue,
 - 2) any other requests to limit the risks of disruption to other candidates

- 3) any other requests to limit risks to the security of the examination venue or examination process:
 - I. Candidates who are asked to leave a venue will also be reported to the Council, who may consider any additional penalty.
- h. Issues arising at the venue eg noise or other disruption must be brought to the attention of the invigilator during the exam. Any complaints made after the exam whereby a candidate believes that their performance may have been impaired are managed by the third party host. There is no change in the stand down period.

Results, reconsiderations and resits – all candidates

4.1 Results

- a. Examination results are released on completion of the examination by the third-party host
- b. Candidates are given a pass or fail only; no exam scripts or detailed results breakdowns will be provided. Candidates who fail the exam can be provided with their results on request.

4.2 Reconsiderations

- a. Candidates who did not attain a pass in the examination may request a reconsideration of the set of questions asked of that candidate in the examination. This is obtained via the third-party provider of the examination who manages the process:
 - I. The reconsideration will be a recheck of the questions to ensure each question had only one valid answer, the question was not ambiguous or otherwise unfair
 - II. The reconsideration of the questions will be undertaken by the third-party host and the candidate must pay all associated fees
 - III. The reconsideration request must occur within 30 days of the candidate sitting the exam.

4.3 Resits

- a. Candidates who passed the examination may not sit again, unless directed to by the Council as a part of a competence review process
- b. Candidates who did not attain a pass in the examination may make a booking to resit the day after the result is released to the candidate, but they will be unable to resit the examination for a period of twenty (20) business days from the results being released
- c. Candidates who do not pass the exam after three attempts will be advised to seek additional learning before attempting the exam again.