



## **Registration Policy for Internationally Qualified Midwives (this excludes applications under the Trans- Tasman Mutual Recognition Act)**

Refers to the following key legislation:

- Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003

And refers to the following related information on the Midwifery Council website:

- Internationally qualified midwives' application guidelines document
- The Competencies for Entry to the Register of Midwives
- Standards for approval of pre-registration midwifery education programmes and accreditation of tertiary education organisations (2nd edition) July 2015
- Documents accepted as Evidence of Identity (EOI)
- Declaration of Residence
- Health Status Disclosure Statement Form
- Reflective Statement on Criminal Conviction
- Vetting Service Request & Consent Form

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## **Policy statement**

Internationally qualified applicants, which is anyone who has completed a midwifery qualification outside of New Zealand, can apply to the Midwifery Council (the Council) seeking registration as a midwife in New Zealand.

All applications for registration are assessed by the Council in accordance with sections 12, 15 – 19 of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (HPCAA).

The Council will register any applicant to practise midwifery within the midwifery scope of practice, if that midwife:

- meets the fitness for registration requirements as set out in section 16 of the HPCAA, and
- holds a prescribed qualification as set out by the Council as allowed for under section 12 of the HPCAA, and
- is assessed as competent to practise within the midwifery scope of practice.

## **1 Fitness for registration**

The principal considerations for fitness for registration are:

### **1.1 English Language**

- a. The ability to effectively communicate in and comprehend the English language is a specific requirement of sections 16(a) and (b) of the HPCAA.
- b. Applicants for whom English is not their first spoken language will be required to demonstrate a reasonable level of proficiency. Applicants are required to provide evidence of successful completion of an English language assessment, prior to applying.
- c. Successful completion means attaining a minimum score as required by the Midwifery Council, in an approved English language test. The Council's **English language requirements** for internationally qualified midwives are outlined in the [Internationally qualified midwives' application guidelines](#).

### **1.2 Conviction disclosure and Police vetting**

- a. Under section 16(c) of the HPCAA, the Council must be assured that the applicant does not have any convictions by a court in New Zealand or elsewhere for an offence that could be punishable by imprisonment for a term of three (3) months or more.

- b. Having a conviction will not necessarily prevent an applicant from being registered as a midwife as all circumstances provided in the applicant's Convictions Declaration will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Registration will not be refused without discussing this with the applicant.
- c. The Council's **Convictions Declaration and Police Certificate requirements** for internationally qualified midwives are outlined in the [Internationally qualified midwives' application guidelines](#).

### **1.3 Health clearance**

- a. Under section 16(d) of the HPCAA, the Council must be assured that the applicant does not have any physical or mental health conditions that would prevent them from performing the functions of a midwife.
- b. Having a mental or physical condition will not necessarily prevent an applicant from being registered as a midwife. All circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Registration will not be refused without discussing this with the applicant.
- c. The Council's **Health Declaration and Medical Certificate requirements** for internationally qualified midwives are outlined in the [Internationally qualified midwives' application guidelines](#).

### **1.4 Person of good standing**

- a. Sections 16(e), (f) and (g) of the HPCAA require that the Council must be satisfied that applicant is held in good standing by any responsible authority or similar body the applicant has been regulated under either in New Zealand or overseas.
- b. Applicants are required to disclose all previous and current registrations with other professional regulators in New Zealand or another country, in order for the Council to ascertain any past or present professional disciplinary proceedings, orders or investigations that could reflect on the applicant's fitness to practise.
- c. The Council will also confirm current registration with a midwifery registration authority to satisfy the requirements of 1.5 iii (1) of this policy.
- d. The Council's **Declaration of Registration with other Authorities requirements** for internationally qualified midwives are outlined in the [Internationally qualified midwives' application guidelines](#).
- e. Applicants must also provide two (2) personal character references. One must be completed by a registered midwife who has worked with the applicant and

is familiar with their midwifery practice. The second must be completed by another person of good standing in their community who has known the applicant for at least two years.

- f. The Council's **Character reference requirements** for internationally qualified midwives are outlined in the [Internationally qualified midwives' application guidelines](#).

### **1.5 No undue risk to the public**

- a. Under section 16(h) of the HPCAA the Council must be assured the applicant does not pose an undue risk to the health or safety of the public.

#### **i. Identity**

- 1) The Council is required to confirm the applicant's identity with certainty, as registration will be made under the full legal name of the applicant.
- 2) Applicants are required to establish their identity by providing the appropriate documentation, in accordance with the Council's **Identity documentation criteria**, as outlined in the [Internationally qualified midwives' application guidelines](#).

#### **ii. Qualification equivalence**

- 1) The Council must be satisfied that an applicant's overseas midwifery qualification is equivalent to the required New Zealand midwifery qualification that is a Bachelor's degree in midwifery from a country that has a formal education accreditation process.
- 2) Applicants must arrange for formal evidence of their pre-registration midwifery qualification to be sent to the Council, including details of the programme content and learning outcomes, as this information will be assessed against the current New Zealand education standards.
- 3) The Council's standards for **Pre-registration midwifery education programmes (midwifery qualification) requirements** for internationally qualified midwives are outlined in the [Internationally qualified midwives' application guidelines](#).

#### **iii. Post-registration experience**

- 1) The Council must be assured that the applicant's midwifery knowledge and skills are current, informed by best practice evidence, and that they have sufficient experience to practise midwifery confidently and autonomously.

- 2) Applicants will need to provide evidence of at least two years' post registration midwifery practice that demonstrates they have worked across the midwifery scope of practice, within the immediate five years preceding the application. This includes any clinical or non-clinical role that requires the use of midwifery skills and knowledge.
- 3) The Council's **Post-registration portfolio requirements** for internationally qualified midwives are outlined in the [Internationally qualified midwives' application guidelines](#).

#### **iv. Competence**

- 1) If the Council is not satisfied whether the applicant's midwifery qualification and post registration practice and education is equivalent to the New Zealand standards for entry to the Register, then applicants will be required to undertake a two-stage competence assessment.
- 2) The first part of this process requires the applicant to sit the international registration examination. If the applicant is successful with this examination, then they will be required to undertake the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) assessment of competence.
- 3) The Council's **Competence Assessment requirements prior to registration in New Zealand** for internationally qualified midwives are outlined in the [Internationally qualified midwives' application guidelines](#).

## **2 After registration**

### **2.1 Entry to the Register**

- a. All internationally qualified applicants who have met the requirements for registration in section 1 above, will be entered into the Register of Midwives as able to practise within the Midwifery Scope of Practice.

### **2.2 Conditions and on-going education**

- a. It is unlikely that a midwife educated in a country other than New Zealand will meet all competencies required of midwives in New Zealand.
- b. Internationally qualified midwives will have conditions placed on their scope of practice and will be required to complete a programme of education, as determined by the Council.
- c. The Council's **Overseas Competence Programme requirements** for internationally qualified midwives are outlined in the [Internationally qualified midwives' application guidelines](#).

### **3 Applicants Who Do Not Obtain Registration**

#### **3.1 Failure to complete the registration process**

- a. Applicants unable to submit all required application documentation within six (6) months of initial application will have to reapply to the Midwifery Council and pay a new application fee.
- b. Where the application is incomplete due to Council process or information required from a third party, then the timeframe will not apply.

#### **3.2 Failure to meet individual criteria**

- a. Applicants who do not satisfy the Council that they are able to meet any of the criteria in section 1 of this policy will be declined registration as a midwife with the Council.
- b. Applicants who still wish to obtain midwifery registration may seek clarification from the Council on what steps would be required to meet the required standards.

#### **3.3 Right of Appeal**

- a. Where the Council proposes to decline an application, section 24 of the HPCAA requires that the applicant will be advised in writing of the reasons for the decision, given a copy of any information on which the Council relies and will be given a reasonable opportunity to make written and oral submissions either personally or by representative to be heard in respect of the matter. The Council's subsequent decision will be final.
- b. Under section 106 of the HPCAA, an unsuccessful applicant may appeal the Council's subsequent decision to decline to register them by lodging a notice of appeal with the District Court. This notice of appeal must be lodged within 20 [twenty] working days after the notice of the Council decision was communicated to the applicant.