



Specialist Medical Education and Training and
Continuing Professional Development
Programmes:

**Process and Guidelines for Recognition of
Vocational Scopes of Practice in New Zealand**

Introduction

The Medical Council of New Zealand (the Council) is responsible for the registration of doctors in New Zealand under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (HPCAA). The HPCAA requires Council to prescribe the scopes of practice which doctors are permitted to perform. The Council has prescribed three broad scopes of practice – general, vocational and special purpose and has recognised 36 vocational scopes of practice. The legal definition of a “vocational scope of practice’ provides a framework within which Council is able to ensure that doctors are competence within a specialised field of medicine.

The Council has a joint memorandum of understanding on a common reaccreditation process with the Australian Medical Council for those training organizations providing training and recertification programmes in both Australia and New Zealand. However the legal and medical context in which areas of practice are initially *recognised* as separate specialist or vocational scopes are different between Australia and New Zealand.

The process for initial recognition of a new vocational scope of practice together with its training and continuing professional development programme described in this document remains unique to New Zealand.

To be recognised as a vocational scope of practice and as the provider of the training and continuing professional development programme, the applicant body must meet the Council’s criteria specified in the Standards for recognition of vocational scopes of practice. The Standards reflect the two stage process. If the stage 1 application is approved the training provider is invited to make a stage 2 application.

If the stage 2 application is approved by Council, the HPCAA requires the Council to publish by notice in the New Zealand Gazette the name of the scope of practice and a brief description of it and the qualification or qualifications for that scope of practice

The Process

Stage 1

Step one: Submit electronically the Stage 1 application document which should address the four standards and also identify the name and proposed definition of the new vocational scope of practice and the proposed prescribed qualification.

A fee of \$3339 plus GST (current total \$3839.85) is payable with the submission of the Stage 1 application.

Step two: Section 14 of the HPCAA requires Council to consult with health practitioners and organisations who may be affected by the proposal to recognise a new vocational scope. In accordance with this requirement, a consultation request will be sent to all VEABs and will include copies of the application. Two months will be allowed for consultation.

Step three: An accreditation team appointed by the Council’s Education Committee (EC) and Council, will assess the application and the consultation responses before preparing a report. The applicant will have an opportunity to view the report to check for omissions or errors of fact prior to it being considered by the EC.

Step four: The EC will make a recommendation to the Council that either:

- the applicant has met criteria 1-4 and should be invited to submit a Stage 2 application or
- the applicant has not met the criteria.

Information correct as at January 2015

The applicant will be informed of Council's decision. As the consultation responses may help with the preparation of the Stage 2 application, anonymised copies may be sent to the applicant.

Applicants that have not met criteria 1-4 will not be invited to continue on to Stage 2 of the process. The fee is non-refundable.

Stage 2 – For applicants that have completed Stage 1

Step five: Submit a stage 2 application electronically.

A further fee of \$3339 plus GST (current total \$3839.85) is payable with the submission of the Stage 2 application.

Step six: An accreditation team will be appointed by the EC. The team will assess the application and prepare a report, which will be provided to the applicant to check for omissions or errors of fact before being presented to the EC.

Step seven: The EC will make a recommendation to Council and the applicant organisation will be advised of the outcome.

Step eight: If Council approves the application Council will publish by notice in the New Zealand Gazette the new scope of practice and its qualification(s).

The process to recognise a new vocational scope and training provider may take approximately 18 months. If you have any questions, please contact an Education Coordinator at education@mcnz.org.nz.