



DIETITIANS BOARD

Te Mana Mātanga Mātai Kai

Supervision, Orientation and Induction for Overseas Trained Dietitians Policy (those registered in the scope of practice Dietitian: Provisional)

This policy refers to the following key legislation:

[Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003](#)

This policy has been developed in conjunction with Right Touch Regulation, the Policies and requirements of other Regulators in New Zealand

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following associated Dietitians Board policy documents:

Registration Policy
Professional Standards & Competencies for Dietitians
Code of Ethics & Conduct for Dietitians

Policy Statement

As required by the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act (HPCAA), the Dietitians Board (the Board) is the regulator responsible for protecting "the health and safety of members of the public by providing for mechanisms to ensure that health practitioners are competent and fit to practise their professions."

Dietitians new to Aotearoa New Zealand need support, particularly orientation and induction. Additionally, to fulfil its obligations under the HPCAA, the Board must establish that the dietitians are competent and fit to practise.

This policy outlines the requirements the Board has in place to be assured that dietitians are able to practise safely and are receiving the support necessary to ensure the public is protected.

INTRODUCTION

In 2024 and 2025, the Board considered its registration processes under the HPCAA. Up to this point, the Board's mechanisms for protecting the public had been focused on assessing the skills and knowledge of overseas trained dietitians through assessment of qualifications and examinations. The requirement for 12 months of supervision was a secondary component.

On review, the Board agreed that there are some jurisdictions that have comparable training and regulatory standards to New Zealand – extensive pre-registration assessment is not necessary for every dietitian from those jurisdictions. However, when shifting the assessment and preparation away from the pre-registration to the post-registration period, it is necessary to establish a standard for supervision. Training and regulation do not always ensure excellence of individual practice – there are occasional outliers and high-quality supervision is required to ensure the public is protected. The supervision required by the Board must have assessment built into the process to ensure the overseas trained dietitian is meeting the Board's required standard of practice. However, the supervision process should not be limited to assessment – it should be a supportive relationship that provides support and encouragement to the dietitian being supervised.

The requirements below describe the Board's minimum expectations for overseas trained dietitians new to New Zealand.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to all dietitians registered in the Scope of Practice: Dietitian, Provisional, their supervisors and their employers.

ORIENTATION AND INDUCTION REQUIREMENTS

Providing safe care in New Zealand means being aware of New Zealand's unique history, culture and medico-legal environment.

To ensure the newly registered dietitian is adequately supported throughout their start in New Zealand and is able to effectively practise within New Zealand's healthcare system and culture, the Board has established minimum expectations for orientation and induction. The orientation and induction plan must be submitted by the employer prior to the confirmation of registration and the issuing of the first Annual Practising Certificate (APC).

The orientation and induction plan must include the following core requirements:

- A minimum 1-week orientation without any clinical responsibility
- Shadowing a minimum of 2 colleagues in the first week (one does not need to be a dietitian)
- Induction to work IT systems, PHARMAC, Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act, Privacy Act and the Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights
- An introduction to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Cultural Safety (Note – the Board requires all dietitians new to New Zealand to complete a Mauri Ora course in their first year but an introduction at the start of employment will be of benefit to the dietitian and their patients. Some overseas trained dietitians might be unfamiliar with the concept of cultural safety.).
- Any standard onsite induction, orientation and cultural safety-related offerings the employer provides.

SUPERVISION REQUIREMENTS

It is necessary to establish a standard for supervision. The purpose of supervision is to protect the health and safety of the public and ensure the practitioner is safe to practise at the end of the supervision period.

There are occasional performance outliers in any profession. High-quality supervision of overseas trained dietitians new to New Zealand is required so the Board can be assured the newly registered dietitian meets the Board's standards. The minimum supervision requirements include:

- at least one initial meeting to ensure the newly registered dietitian knows where to get information (and who they might need to ask), is settling in and if they have identified any assistance that would help them settle and feel comfortable starting work
- for clinical roles, the supervisor will sit in during consultations for the first 3 patients (the supervisor must use the Board's Clinical Observation Form)
- fortnightly supervision meetings for first 3 months, each session will include review of patient notes
- a supervision plan that has been submitted by the employer and approved by the Board
- utilisation of Supervision Report template to ensure the supervisory relationship includes a focus on support and assessment
- quarterly submission of supervision reports.

If the supervisor notices areas of practice that do not meet the Board's standards, these must be discussed with the newly registered dietitian and reported to the Board. Where patients may be at risk, action must be taken to protect patients from harm.

SUPERVISOR REQUIREMENTS

The supervisor must:

- be registered in the Scope of Practice: Dietitian with the Dietitians Board
- be in good standing with the Board
- hold a current Annual Practising Certificate
- be employed by the same employer as the supervisee and be available to provide onsite (face to face) supervision
- have a minimum of 2 years' experience working as a registered dietitian (the full two years does not need to be in New Zealand)
- if supervising a prescriber, must also hold a prescribing endorsement.

Training requirements for supervisors

From **2 February 2028** supervisors will need to have supervision training and maintain their supervisory skills. The minimum accepted training courses are:

- Te Whatu Ora provided supervision training (must be onsite and face to face)
- [New Zealand Coaching and Mentoring](#) (Supervision Skills for Health & Social Service Professionals)

A number of education providers offer diplomas/certificates for those with deeper interest in developing their supervision skills. Extended courses, which are specifically targeted to supervision within healthcare, will also be accepted. Examples include:

- [Wintec: Introduction to Supervision \(Level 7\)](#)
- [Wintec: Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Supervision](#)
- [The University of Auckland: Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Supervision](#)
- [ABACUS: Counselling, Training, and Supervision Ltd](#)
- [Te Wānanga o Aotearoa: Kaitiakitanga Post Graduate Diploma in Bicultural Supervision](#)

Dietitians who are not sure their preferred training course will meet the Board's requirements are asked to contact the Board.

Supervisors are expected to have current supervision skills. If the training is more than 5 years prior **and** the proposed supervisor has not supervised within the previous 5 years, then supervision training will be required.

EMPLOYER REQUIREMENTS

Employers are required to:

- undertake the usual human resource processes and due diligence when employing a new member of staff (CV review, interviews, reference checks, etc.)
- be aware of any particular areas of support that may be required – moving countries can be stressful and employer support can ease the transition
- ensure the induction and orientation plan is carried out – this includes providing the staff with sufficient time to complete the plan
- provide the supervisor with the necessary time and resources to complete the required (and Board-approved) supervision
- ensure supervisors have the required training to be supervisors.

Employers are not expected to undertake individual evaluations of applicants' qualifications. The Board has evaluated the available information and has decided individual evaluations of qualifications are no longer required for dietitians coming from some jurisdictions. Dietitians coming from other jurisdictions will have been individually assessed, including having completed examinations prior to becoming eligible for registration.

The supervision requirements described in the policy are to mitigate the risk to the public of any practitioners whose practice may not meet the Board's standards (even though their training has met the standard).

COMPLETING THE SUPERVISION PERIOD

To complete the supervision period and be eligible for registration in *Scope of Practice: Dietitian*, the following must be completed:

- a minimum of 12 months supervision
- four (quarterly) supervision reports, the last three of which must indicate the supervised dietitian meets the Board's standard of practice
- for clinical roles, the first supervision report must be accompanied by three completed Clinical Observation Forms
- Mauri Ora course: [Foundation Course in Cultural Competency](#)
- completion of the Health and Disability Commissioner learning [modules](#)
- A complete application for registration in the *Scope of Practice: Dietitian* approved by the supervisor.

DEFINITIONS

Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act (HPCAA) 2003 – the Legislation that the Board is responsible for using to protect the health and safety of the public. Available [here](#).

PHARMAC – a government agency that decides which medicines will be publicly funded

Privacy Act 2020 – the Legislation that provides privacy protections and regulates how personal data is collected, stored and used.

FURTHER INFORMATION

To support employers and supervisors, the Board has developed *Guidelines for Induction, Orientation and Supervision* as well as a *Supervision Report Template*.

For more information about the Board's standards, please see *Professional Standards & Competencies for Dietitians*.

Please contact the Board directly if there are any questions or concerns.