

Registration as a Pharmacist in New Zealand

Information booklet for overseas pharmacists applying for registration through the Non-Recognised Equivalent Qualifications Route (Non-REQR)*

***This route is for pharmacists qualified in all countries except
Australia, Canada, Ireland, the UK and the USA**

Contact us at:

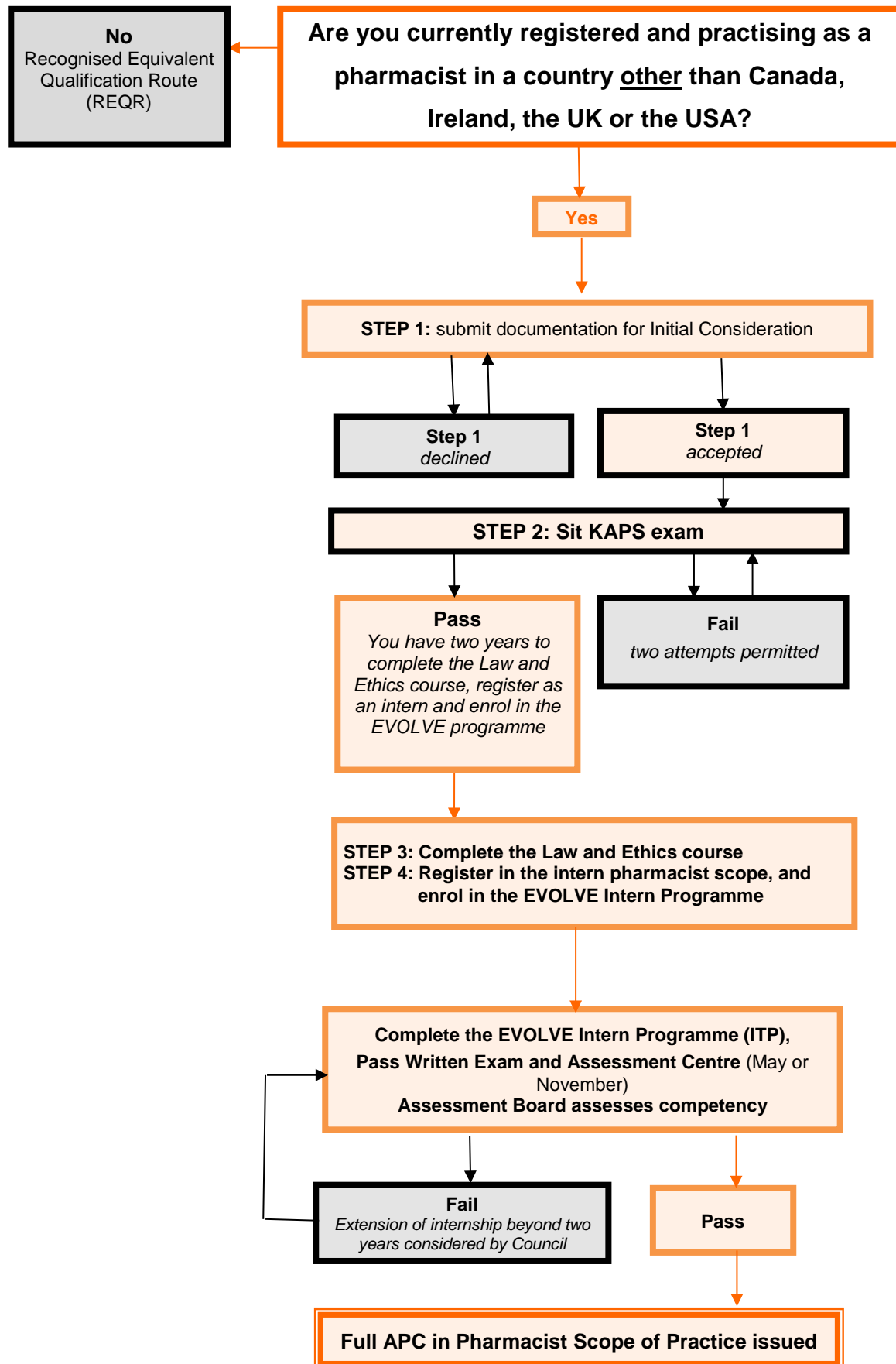
Email: enquiries@pharmacycouncil.org.nz

Website: <http://www.pharmacycouncil.org.nz/>

Postal Address: Pharmacy Council of New Zealand
PO Box 25137
Featherston Street
Wellington 6146
New Zealand

(Updated: July 2017)

Registration Route for Non-REQR Pharmacists



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INTRODUCTION

The New Zealand health system has a strong focus on primary health care and clinical pharmacy. The Pharmacy Council of New Zealand (PCNZ) assists overseas trained pharmacists through an assessment process towards registration to enable them to practise in this environment.

The practice of pharmacy is necessarily broad and is wider than pharmacists working directly with patients, given that such roles influence clinical practice and public safety. In a clinical role, the pharmacist acts as a medicines manager, providing patient-centred medication therapy management, health improvement and disease prevention services, usually in a collaborative environment. Pharmacists ensure safe and quality use of medicines and optimise health outcomes by contributing to patient assessment and to the selection, prescribing, monitoring and evaluation of medicine therapy.

It is a legal requirement under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 for all **practising** pharmacists, including intern pharmacists, to be both **registered** with the PCNZ and hold a current **Annual Practising Certificate**.

NOTE: Practising without meeting this legal requirement is an offence.

The pharmacy profession in New Zealand includes pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy assistants. Pharmacists work in community or hospital pharmacy as an integral part of the healthcare team, or they work in specialised roles such as education, research or the pharmaceutical industry. PCNZ is not involved in the training and assessment of pharmacy technicians or assistants.

INITIAL ENQUIRIES AND STARTING THE REGISTRATION PROCESS

For initial enquiries, please contact the Registrations Officer:

Telephone: +64 4 495 0330

Email: enquiries@pharmacycouncil.org.nz

To start the registration process, please send your Application for Initial Consideration for Registration and supporting documentation to the following:

By post:

The Registrations Officer
Pharmacy Council of New Zealand
PO Box 25137
Wellington 6146
New Zealand

By courier:

The Registrations Officer
Pharmacy Council of New Zealand
Level 18, Plimmer Towers, 2-6 Gilmer Tce
Wellington 6011
New Zealand

PLEASE NOTE

The Pharmacy Council of New Zealand reserves the right to cancel an application at any stage in the process.

THE NON-REQR REGISTRATION PROCESS INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING STEPS

STEP 1

- **Initial Consideration**

An eligibility assessment of your qualifications and associated documents (including English language) is done to determine your eligibility to continue with the registration process and undertake the Knowledge Assessment of Pharmaceutical Sciences (KAPS) exam.

- **English Language Requirements**

You must satisfy the PCNZ that you can communicate effectively in English to ensure safe practice. This can be done by achieving an acceptable IELTS (International English Language Testing System) or OET (Occupational English Test) test result. This is part of the eligibility assessment and your application cannot be considered unless an approved standard is met.

STEP 2

- **Knowledge Assessment of Pharmaceutical Sciences (KAPS) Exam**

You must demonstrate you have the knowledge and skills deemed equivalent to the New Zealand BPharm degree by passing the KAPS exam. It consists of two papers of multiple choice questions covering pharmaceutical chemistry, pharmacology and physiology, pharmaceuticals and therapeutics.

STEP 3

- **New Zealand Pharmacy Legislation course**

Understanding New Zealand pharmacy legislation and the ethical framework underpinning the Code of Ethics, as they relate to pharmacy practice in New Zealand, forms the basis of knowledge and application of law and ethics.

You are required to successfully complete the PCNZ approved law and ethics course, "*New Zealand Pharmacy Legislation*," which is provided by the School of Pharmacy at the University of Auckland. This is a pre-requisite to entry into the supervised practice period.

STEP 4

- **Supervised Practice**

Once you have passed the KAPS exam and completed the *New Zealand Pharmacy Legislation* course, you will be eligible to register as an intern pharmacist. Under the supervision of a New Zealand registered pharmacist you will need to complete a period of supervised practical training, in either a community or hospital pharmacy, and meet the following requirements:

- **Complete the EVOLVE Intern Programme.**

The Pharmaceutical Society of New Zealand Inc., run this programme for a minimum period of 26-weeks. It begins in either May or December each year

- **Pass the Written Exam for Interns**

You must pass this exam before you attend the Assessment Centre.

- **Pass the Assessment Centre**

On completion of the EVOLVE Intern programme you are required to attend an Assessment Centre which is the final assessment for intern pharmacists before registering in the Pharmacist Scope of Practice.

1. INITIAL CONSIDERATION – STEP 1

Time Limit: 3 Months

From the date your Application for Initial Consideration is received at the PCNZ, and the payment is processed, you have three months to provide all of the documents required to complete Step 1. If the time limit is exceeded, a further fee may be charged.

Please read the **Supplementary Information** on page 12 of this booklet.

If your original documents are not in English, you must obtain an officially certified English translation. All documents must be supported by a Statutory Declaration to the effect that they are genuine and relate to you.

1.1 Documents to be submitted

The following documents must be sent **DIRECTLY** to the PCNZ by your university or registration authority(s):

- a) **Confirmation of completion of your pharmacy degree and a copy of your academic record (degree transcript).**
 - **Note:** a 2 year qualification in pharmacy does not meet the qualification requirement for registration. Applicants who graduated after 1 January 2006 must have completed at least a 4 year degree.
- b) **Certificate(s) of current and past registration.** Each authority where you have been registered or licensed must send these certificates directly to the PCNZ.
 - **Note:** You must maintain registration with your current authority until you are granted registration in New Zealand.
- c) **Statement(s) of good standing.** Each authority where you have been registered or licensed must provide these statements directly to the PCNZ.
 - **Note:** The date of issue must be within **six months** of the date of your application.

1.2 Two References

Each reference must be from a pharmacist employer or a pharmacist colleague who has worked with you in your professional capacity for at least 12 months within the last 5 years and can attest to your post registration clinical practice.

Each reference must include details of your role and responsibilities, degree of interaction with patients and “other health professionals”, your ability to translate theoretical knowledge into practice ensuring safe outcomes for patients e.g. history taking, assessment and evaluation of medicines, decision making and communication of medicines and related information.

Notes:

- Referees must write the references themselves on the [Referee Report](#) form
- A job description or list of duties is not acceptable as a reference
- Referees must provide their name, position and current contact details and attach their business card or some official document which clearly shows their occupation as a pharmacist.

Each reference must be posted **DIRECTLY** to the PCNZ with the referee’s signature across the seal of the envelope.

1.3 You must submit the following documents to the PCNZ:

- **Updated Curriculum Vitae (CV)** including your personal details, qualifications, work history and experience, achievements etc.
- You must enclose a certified copy of the details page from your passport or birth certificate as evidence of your full legal name. Please also enclose any evidence of change of name, if applicable. (*Please ensure that all certified documents are signed by the same person – see supplement information on page 12*)
- Evidence of your application to register as a pharmacist in any other country and the outcome of your application.
- Completed **Application for Initial Consideration for Registration as a Pharmacist**.

1.4 Application Fee

The fee, for initial consideration for registration (Step 1), will be processed when your application is received by PCNZ. The current list of fees can be found on page 13.

2. ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

Recent IELTS or OET test results (not older than **two** years), which demonstrates your competence in English language, must be submitted as part of the initial consideration (STEP 1).

2.1 IELTS requirements

A minimum score of **7.0** in **each** of the four bands (listening, reading, writing and speaking) with a minimum overall band score of **7.5** in the **Academic** category.

You must:

- Provide results which show the required minimum scores were achieved at **ONE** sitting of the test only.
- Arrange for the Test Centre to send your results **DIRECTLY** to the PCNZ.

Please visit the [IELTS website](#), for further information.

2.2 OET requirements

An **A or B** score in **each** of the four bands (listening, reading, writing and speaking) achieved within **two** years of the date of application. Results from previous OET tests (which are no older than **two** years), will be accepted if the applicant does not achieve all the required scores at one sitting.

You must send your results into the PCNZ, where they will be verified against OET records.

Please visit the [OET website](#), for further information.

3. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Your application and supporting documents will be assessed and authenticated by the PCNZ once your application is complete. If all of the requirements for Step 1 have been met (including English language), you will be notified and invited to proceed to Step 2. A KAPS exam application and list of exam venues will be provided to you.

4. KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT OF PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES (KAPS) EXAM – STEP 2

Time Limit: 2 Years

Both KAPS papers must be passed within two years, of passing Step 1.

General information

The KAPS exam is computer-based in a multiple choice question (MCQ) format. It is designed to test the candidate's knowledge of basic pharmaceutical sciences related to present day pharmacy practice. The exam consists of two papers, each consisting of 100 questions covering both theory and practice. Each paper is of two hours duration.

The PCNZ contracts the Australian Pharmacy Council (APC) to administer the KAPS exam on its behalf. The APC will process all exam applications and will advise candidates of all administrative details for the exam such as the time, date and venue.

In 2017 the exam is being held three times. Applications for the APRIL exam must be received at PCNZ no later than **23 February 2017**; for the JUNE exam no later than **27 April 2017**; and for the DECEMBER exam no later than **26 October 2017**.

Pass mark

The overall pass mark for the KAPS exam is 50% in Paper 1 and 50% in Paper 2. In addition, candidates must pass each of the sub-sections in Paper 1 and Paper 2.

Number of attempts and Validity

Candidates are allowed **two** attempts to pass the KAPS exam. A subsequent attempt may be allowed at the discretion of the Registrar.

Once a candidate has passed both papers, the KAPS result remains valid for **two** years. This may be extended at the discretion of the Registrar.

Results

Exam results are posted confidentially on the PCNZ website approximately **6-8 weeks** after the date of the exam. You will be notified by email and given a username and password to access your results. If successful, you will be eligible to enrol in the law and ethics course, *New Zealand Pharmacy Legislation*.

Refunds and deferrals policy

Prior to the closing date for exam entries, a candidate who has submitted an application may change the date they wish to sit the exam, or request that their application be withdrawn, at no cost.

After the closing date you are not able make changes to the exam date.

A request for a refund of 50% the exam fee can only be considered in exceptional circumstances. Suitable evidence of the reason for the request must be provided, eg a medical certificate.

**For detailed information on the KAPS exam
including subject areas and topics, sample questions and exam venues and dates
please visit the [APC website](http://www.pharmacycouncil.org.nz)**

5. NEW ZEALAND PHARMACY LEGISLATION COURSE – STEP 3

Time Limit: 2 Years

After passing KAPS a maximum of two years is allowed to:

- **complete the Law and Ethics course (Step 3) AND**
- **register as an Intern and enrol in the EVOLVE Intern Programme (Step 4).**

To be eligible to enrol in the online law and ethics course, *New Zealand Pharmacy Legislation*, you must have successfully passed both Papers 1 and 2 of the KAPS (Step 2) exam within the allowable timeframe.

General Information

Enrolment applications are made directly to the [Centre for Continuing Education](#) (CCE), Te Ara Pukenga, Auckland University. Courses are run twice a year, at the beginning of February and July. (There is a cost for this course, payable directly to the University.)

Success in the *New Zealand Pharmacy Legislation* course is a **pre-requisite** to entry into the EVOLVE Intern Training Programme. Assessment of ethical decision-making skills will be undertaken once you are enrolled in the EVOLVE programme.

5.1 Course content

The course will be delivered through 10 modules over 10 weeks, with revision and assessment in weeks 11 and 12. These modules will cover legal, ethical and professional obligations in areas such as:

- Regulating Medicines
- Labelling and Compounding Medicines
- Prescribing Medicines
- Dispensing Medicines
- Selling Medicines over the Internet
- Regulating Health Professionals and Pharmacists
- Pharmacy Ownership
- Controlled Drugs
- Privacy
- Consumer Guarantees and Advertising

The modules will introduce pharmacists to why regulations for medicines exist and what protections they afford. They will also provide opportunities to explore the legal, ethical and professional obligations in situations reflecting practice. Each of the modules will draw upon and focus on three overarching themes: medicines, the pharmacist and the patient.

For further information, please contact [Sanya Ram](#), Senior Tutor in Law and Ethics.

5.2 Results

The School of Pharmacy at Auckland University will notify the PCNZ of the names of successful candidates within six weeks of course completion.

Successful candidates will be advised they have completed Step 3 of the registration process, and advised they are eligible to register in the Intern Pharmacist Scope of Practice and to enrol in the EVOLVE Intern Training Programme.

6. SUPERVISED PRACTICE – STEP 4

The Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003, (the statute under which the PCNZ operates) requires each health profession to describe what their practitioners do. This is called a **Scope of Practice**.

The PCNZ has three scopes of practice for pharmacists:

- Intern pharmacist
- Pharmacist
- Pharmacist prescriber

6.1 Intern Pharmacist Scope of Practice

An intern pharmacist must always practise under the supervision of a registered, practising pharmacist. The Pharmacist Scope of Practice describes all the services which every intern pharmacist must demonstrate competence in prior to registration as a pharmacist. This includes acting as a medicines manager, ensuring safe and quality use of medicines and optimising health outcomes by contributing to the selection, prescribing, monitoring and evaluation of medicine therapy. Researching information and providing evidence-based advice and recommendations on medicines and medicine-related health problems to patients, their carers and other healthcare professionals is also part of the intern pharmacist scope of practice.

6.2 Work permit

In order to undertake your internship (supervised practice), you must have a permit to work in New Zealand. It is your responsibility to contact [Immigration New Zealand](#) and ensure that you are issued with a permit which will allow you entry into New Zealand to do your internship. If you have already gained permanent residency in New Zealand or New Zealand citizenship, then a work permit is not required.

6.3 Intern Programme

The [EVOLVE Intern Programme](#) is provided by the Pharmaceutical Society of New Zealand Inc (PSNZ), the professional support organisation for pharmacists. (EVOLVE programme fees are payable directly to PSNZ.)

You are required to undertake supervised, practical training with a preceptor pharmacist in a community or hospital pharmacy. Your preceptor and the pharmacy must be approved by the PSNZ and the preceptor must be trained in workplace assessment.

Practical training must be for a minimum of 26 weeks or 44 weeks fulltime (minimum of 35 hours per week), or 12 months part time (minimum of 20 hours per week). You can only register as an Intern and enter the EVOLVE programme during the months of **May** or **December**.

As the EVOLVE programme is very intensive, PCNZ **strongly** recommends that you consider completing the programme over 44 weeks rather than 26 weeks. It is also strongly recommended that you start the programme at the beginning of the month, so that you have as much available time to complete the programme requirements.

7. WRITTEN EXAM FOR INTERNS

You are required to pass this exam before you attend the Assessment Centre. It is a multi-choice computer based exam, which is held three times a year. Interns must pass the exam to be eligible to attend Assessment Centre.

View the [PCNZ website](#) for more information on when and where you can sit the exam.

8. ASSESSMENT CENTRE

On completion of the EVOLVE Intern Programme you are required to attend an Assessment Centre, which is an Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) to assess your ability to apply your pharmacy knowledge. The Assessment Centre is held in May and November of each year. This is the final assessment for intern pharmacists.

You cannot attend an Assessment Centre until you have successfully completed Steps 3 and 4. If attendance at a further Assessment Centre is required, additional fees are payable.

If, on the basis of all the preregistration assessments, you are judged as competent against the **Competence Standards for Pharmacists**, you will be eligible to apply for registration as a pharmacist in New Zealand.

The [Competence Standards for Pharmacists](#) are available on the PCNZ's website.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

- a) The Pharmacy Council of New Zealand reserves the right to cancel an application at any stage in the process.
- b) A **certified copy** is a photocopy of the original document that has been certified as a true copy. In New Zealand this can be by a JP, Solicitor or NZ Court Registrar. A statutory declaration must be signed by the same person who certifies your documentation.

The following extract from the Oaths and Declarations Act 1957 (s.11) explains who can make a statutory declaration or certify documents outside of New Zealand:

1. A declaration made in a Commonwealth country other than New Zealand shall be made before a Judge, a Commissioner of Oaths, a notary public, a Justice of the Peace, or any person authorised by the law of that country to administer an oath there for the purpose of a judicial proceeding, or before a Commonwealth representative, or before a solicitor of the High Court of New Zealand.
2. A declaration made in a country other than a Commonwealth country shall be made before a Commonwealth representative, or before a Judge, or before a notary public, or before a solicitor of the High Court of New Zealand.
3. Any document purporting to have affixed, impressed, or subscribed thereon or thereto the seal or signature of any person authorised by this section to take a declaration shall be admitted in evidence without proof of the seal or signature being the seal or signature of that person or of the official or other character of that person.

- c) Only **original copies** of applications sent by mail or courier will be accepted.
- d) **Identification:** Select the ethnicity you identify most with from the list below:

New Zealand European/Pakeha	Niuean	Indian
New Zealand Maori	Tokelauan	Other Asian
Other European	Fijian	Middle Eastern
Samoan	Other Pacific Island Groups	Latin American/Hispanic
Cook Island Maori	South East Asian	African (or cultural group of African origin)
Tongan	Chinese	Other

- e) Disclosures:

Have you ever been:

- Affected by a mental or physical condition with the potential to affect your fitness to practise pharmacy?
- Convicted of any offence by any Court?
- The subject of an investigation, disciplinary or criminal proceeding, or order in New Zealand or any other country (such as Health & Disability Commissioner, Ministry of Health, or other special audits)?

Under Section 16 of the HPCAA, disclosure of information concerning your competence and fitness to practise is required to enable the Council to carry out its principal purpose of 'protecting the health and safety of members of the public' and to ensure you satisfy the statutory requirements for registration.

It is in your interest to disclose anything which may affect your future registration as an intern. Please download a [disclosure form](#) from our website and forward it with your application in an envelope marked "Confidential to the Registrar".

SUMMARY OF PHARMACY COUNCIL COSTS FOR THE REGISTRATION PROCESS

	Resident in NZ (incl. GST) NZ\$	Non resident (excl. GST) NZ\$
Step 1: Application for Initial Consideration for Registration as a Pharmacist	690.00	600.00
Step 2: Knowledge Assessment of Pharmaceutical Sciences (KAPS) exam	2,093.00	1,820.00
Step 3: Auckland School of Pharmacy <i>New Zealand Pharmacy Legislation</i> course. Course Co-ordinator: Sanya Ram NB: There is an additional cost for this course, payable directly to the University.		
Step 4: Application for Registration as an Intern Written Exam for Interns NB: The EVOLVE Intern Training Programme is an additional cost, payable directly to the Pharmaceutical Society of NZ.	695.11 820.00	

NOTES:

1. The Goods and Services Tax (GST) is only payable by applicants' resident in New Zealand.
2. Credit/Debit card payments incur a 2% processing charge which will be added to your payment.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What work experience must I have to be considered for registration?

A: You must have at least 12 months' continuous, post registration, practical work experience as a pharmacist, within the last five years, in a clinical setting (community or hospital pharmacy only).

Q: Will the Pharmacy Council find me a pharmacy to do my internship?

A: No, it is your responsibility to find an intern site, but the following links may help you:

Website addresses for employment agencies that assist pharmacists to find work:

[NZ Pharmacy Employment Ltd](#)

[Medlink International Recruitment Centre Ltd](#)

A list of [public hospitals](#) in New Zealand:

Websites which advertise pharmacy jobs in New Zealand:

[Trade Me Jobs](#)

[NZ Hospital Pharmacists' Association](#)

As another suggestion, you could search for all the pharmacies in a particular area using the Search Facility of the [White Pages](#) telephone directory. In the 'Who' box type the word "pharmacy" and in the 'Where' box type for example "Christchurch" (or you could refine your search by typing in an area of Christchurch such as "Riccarton") and click on the find button. This will list all the pharmacies in the area with their contact details.

Q: If I have passed the KAPS exam as part of the registration process in Australia, do I have to sit it again if I want to register in New Zealand?

A: No, but you must complete Step 1 of the registration process.

Q: I have a 2 year Diploma in Pharmacy and have done six months internship, can I apply for registration?

A: No, a 2 year Diploma in Pharmacy does not meet the qualification requirement for initial consideration for registration.

Q: I am a pharmacist from an EU country and I am now registered in the UK, which registration process do I apply for?

A: If you gained registration in the UK through the EU mutual recognition agreement, then you apply under the Non-REQR process. However, if you gained registration in the UK through the OSPAP programme, then you can apply under the [REQR process](#).

Q: I have my registration certificate and academic record with me, will it be acceptable if I send these into you?

A: No, confirmation of your registration and good standing must be sent DIRECTLY to the Pharmacy Council by your registration authority(s); and confirmation of completion of your pharmacy degree and a copy of your academic record (degree transcript) must be sent DIRECTLY to the Pharmacy Council by your university.

Q: After completing Step 1, is there a time limit in which I have to sit the KAPS exam?

A: Yes, both KAPS papers must be passed within two years.

Q: I have been granted permanent residence in New Zealand, can I work in a pharmacy?

A: Yes, once you have completed Step 1 of the registration process, the Pharmacy Council considers you to be actively seeking registration as a pharmacist in New Zealand. This would allow you to work as a Pharmacy Graduate in either a community or hospital pharmacy under the direct supervision of a registered, practising pharmacist. The duties of a Pharmacy Graduate are similar to those performed by a trainee Pharmacy Technician. However, the Pharmacy Council has the expectation that you will sit and pass the KAPS exam within two years. It is not acceptable to work as a Pharmacy Graduate indefinitely without making any attempt to sit the KAPS exam, as this does not constitute “actively seeking” registration.

Q: I have passed the TOEFL exam. Will you accept this in lieu of the IELTS?

A: No, the Pharmacy Council of New Zealand does not recognise the TOEFL as meeting the English language requirements for Initial Consideration for Registration as a Pharmacist in New Zealand. The TOEFL is used to meet the English language requirements when applying for registration as a pharmacist in the USA. You have to pass either the IELTS or the OET.

Q: Why has the Pharmacy Council set the IELTS requirements at a minimum of 7.0 for each of the four bands and 7.5 overall?

A: The Pharmacy Council of New Zealand, together with most of the other health regulatory bodies in New Zealand, has to be assured that an intern pharmacist has reached a level of English to be able to communicate effectively with their preceptor, other health professional and a member of the public, as per sections 16(a) and (b) of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act (2003). The Australian Pharmacy Council has the same IELTS requirements.