



Questions and Answers

Statement of Practice for Counselling in Health Settings

Te Rōpū Kaiwhiriwhiri o Aotearoa - New Zealand Association of Counsellors

Te Whatu Ora – Health New Zealand

Q. Who is eligible to be registered in this new accreditation

A. NZAC 'full' Members who have the following qualifications

- Bachelor of Counselling or Master of Counselling
- An overseas qualification assessed by NZQA and recognised by NZAC as being equivalent to a Bachelor or Master of Counselling.
- Current Annual Practising Certificate (APC)
- Complete police vetting every 3 years
- Complete Puawananga in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) every 3 years

Q. Where can I work if I am registered?

A. In the Health Sector employed or contracted, any service that is funded by Te Whatu Ora (previously DHBs and other Ministry of Health funded organisations) can now employ or contract Te Whatu Ora Accredited NZAC Counsellors.

Organisations such as:

- Primary and Community Health
- Medical Centres
- Alcohol and other Drug services
- Mental Health and Addiction services
- Youth Mental Health Services
- Kaupapa Māori services
- Primary Health Organisations

Q. Who is not able to register?

A. Provisional Members.

Full members who do not have the required qualifications described above.

Q. If I do not have the requirements for registration under Te Whatu Ora Accreditation what can I do?

A. National Executive will be starting a project to review the pathway for full Members who have a qualification that precedes the 2019 NZAC Education Standards requirements for a Bachelor's or Master's Counselling qualification. This project will commence in the 2023 -24 budget year.

Q. Does it cost to become Te Whatu Ora Accredited with NZAC?

A. No there is no extra cost to being Te Whatu Ora Accredited as an NZAC Member.

Q. When will I be able to be employed or contracted if I meet the requirements?

A. As soon as the Te Whatu Ora Accredited Membership pathway is available on the NZAC website Members can register for Te Whatu Ora accreditation. Once you have your Te Whatu Ora accredited APC you will be able to apply for mental health and wellbeing positions advertised in the health sector. We anticipate this will be by the end of August 2022.

Q. What do I have to do to be registered?

A. The new accreditation pathway will be through the NZAC website. It is an online application under membership.

- Apply under Membership on the website menu – Te Whatu Ora Accreditation
- Your APC needs to be valid
- Follow the online instructions
- Upload required qualifications
- Complete the Police Vetting application
- The Membership Manager will be notified once the police vetting information is returned and will release your new Te Whatu Ora Accreditation APC.

Q. I work in the health sector now. Will this impact my current employment or contract?

A. This will be an employment discussion between the individual NZAC Counsellor and the employer. It is unlikely this accreditation will have an impact on any current employment situations. It will open up more employment options for NZAC Counsellors who are eligible for accreditation to work in the health sector.

Q. Is NZAC still self-regulated?

A. Yes, NZAC continues to be self-regulated. Te Whatu Ora Accreditation is a co-accreditation model with Te Whatu Ora. It is aligned with the HPCA Act requirements and is recognised by Te Whatu Ora.

Q. What is different now for NZAC members?

A. From 2023 some changes are being incorporated to align with Te Whatu Ora's requirements.

- Every 3 years, all members must complete a Police Vetting application.
- Every 3 years, all members must choose Puawananga Kaitiakitanga in their Continuing Professional Development.
- Te Whatu Ora will receive NZAC's anonymised data from the annual audit of 10% of Members' Continuing Professional Development.
- Recommended changes are being made to the Complaints process that includes having a layperson on the Hearing Panels, and referrals to the Health and Disability Commission office for investigation for any high-level complaints. This aligns NZAC with the HPCA Act.

Q. Why did NZAC not seek to be HPCA Act registered?

A. The Ministry of Health conducted a review of the Counselling Profession and options for registration in 2021. The outcome of this review showed the best pathway for the profession was a co-regulation model. Registration under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act would be too time-consuming, taking upwards of 10 years to complete. In addition, it is not the only way to guarantee effective, ethical professional and safe services for the public.

The preferred option of co-accreditation was agreed to as best meeting the needs of NZAC members, the public and the Ministry of Health. It means NZAC can continue to develop as a Te Tiriti-based Association while progressing self-determination and advocating for the counselling profession.