

The New Zealand Dental Registration Examinations' policy

Approved by	Council
Date approved	September 2021

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Dental Council (Council) can fulfil its responsibility to protect public safety by ensuring all registered practitioners are competent and safe to practise, regardless of where they were educated. This policy enables Council to ensure a proportionate, consistent, fair, and transparent approach to its eligibility criteria for sitting New Zealand Dental Registration Examinations.

Scope

This policy applies to the New Zealand Dental Registration Examinations. Council has gazetted examinations as prescribed qualifications to enable registration in the professions of dentistry (including specialties), oral health therapy, dental hygiene, dental therapy, and dental technology.

This policy applies to:

- a) applicants for registration who do not have a prescribed qualification and who choose to sit a New Zealand Dental Registration Examination
- b) applicants directed by Council to sit a New Zealand Dental Registration Examination for regulatory purposes (for an example, refer to the Recency of practice policy).

A pass in the New Zealand Dental Registration Examination provides the candidate with a prescribed qualification. They must still meet the registration requirements set out in sections 15 and 16 of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 and Council's Registration as an oral health practitioner in New Zealand policy.

Policy

1. The following gazetted examinations fully assess each applicant's knowledge, skills, and competence in their profession to ensure they meet the required standard of competence required to practise in New Zealand:
 - a) New Zealand Dentist Registration Examination (NZDREX)
 - b) New Zealand Dental Specialist Registration Examinations (NZDSREX)
 - c) New Zealand Oral Health Therapy Registration Examination (NZOHTREX)
 - d) New Zealand Dental Hygiene Registration Examination (NZDHREX)
 - e) New Zealand Dental Therapy Registration Examination (NZDTREX)
 - f) New Zealand Dental Technology Registration Examination (NZDTechREX)

- The New Zealand Dentist Registration Examination (NZDREX) is administered through the National Dental Examining Board of Canada (NDEB) and applicants must pass the NDEB Equivalency Process. To assess competence, examinations consist of components assessing applicant's knowledge, clinical judgement, and clinical skills. Detail on the specific examination components is available on the Council website. The NDEB Equivalency Process has its own assessments, entry, and pass criteria and is, therefore, not included in the Entry or Pass or Withdrawal sections of this policy.

Entry:

- Applicants (including those directed by the Council to sit a New Zealand Dental Registration Examination) must hold (and provide satisfactory evidence of) an appropriate qualification for the profession in which they are seeking registration in, to sit the examination. The entry qualification requirements are set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Qualification required to sit examination

Examination	Dental qualifications
New Zealand Dental Hygiene Registration Examination (NZDHREX)	Two-year dental hygiene qualification or undergraduate dental hygiene degree from a recognised tertiary academic institution
New Zealand Dental Therapy Registration Examination (NZDTREX)	Two-year dental therapy qualification or undergraduate dental therapy degree from a recognised tertiary academic institution.
New Zealand Oral Health Therapy Registration Examination (NZOHTREX)	Three-year oral health qualification (covering both restorative and preventative care; historically related to dental hygiene and dental therapy) or an undergraduate oral health therapy degree from a recognised tertiary academic institution.
New Zealand Dental Technology Registration Examination (NZDTechREX)	Three-year dental technology qualification from a recognised tertiary academic institution or a two-year dental technology qualification from a recognised tertiary academic institution with appropriate subsequent experience.
New Zealand Dental Specialist Registration Examination (NZDSREX)	A three-year postgraduate dental qualification in the specialty from a recognised tertiary academic institution or a two-year qualification with appropriate subsequent experience.

- Council has determined that the applicant must not exceed the maximum number of attempts. An applicant has a maximum of three attempts within three years from the date of taking the first examination. Council strongly advises an applicant to undertake a course of re-training prior to commencing the final attempt.

Pass:

- An applicant will only be deemed successful in passing a New Zealand Dental Registration Examination when they have passed all components of examinations.
- An applicant for NZDHREX, NZDTREX NZOHTREX must pass the written component before proceeding to the clinical component,

Withdrawals:

7. Full examination fees are payable upon application. If a withdrawal is received 40 working days before the examination date, then a partial refund of fees may be decided on a case-by-case basis for limited circumstances, including medical conditions.

References

1. Fitness to practice and fitness for registration policy
2. Registration as an oral health practitioner in New Zealand policy.
3. English Language requirements and tests policy.
4. Recency of practice policy.
5. Dental Council website www.dcnz.org.nz for information on TMVI practice standards, current examination fees and application process etc.