

Registration Guidelines

The criteria for registration has changed and in these pages you will find the information you require to assist you in completing your application for registration as a sterile technician.

Why change the registration process?

When voluntary registration was introduced, it was a new concept for the profession and for the Technicians to come to terms with. This was the commencement of the association telling Technicians and employers “that we are becoming professionals”. Over the years since registration was first introduced, a few key factors have now changed.

These include:

- Membership of the professional body AHA NZ (Allied Health Association of New Zealand).
- NZQA acceptance of the qualifications provided by the Open Polytechnic of NZ as the National Qualifications in Sterilising Technology.
- NZQA approval for the development of the Level 4 Certificate and Level 5 Diploma in Sterilising Technology.

With these actual and impending changes and the fact that we, as an association, are members of a larger professional group, it was time to review and introduce new registration criteria. By doing so we are demonstrating that we are growing as a profession and can rise and adapt to the challenges that come with the title.

What are we looking for in the registration process?

When a Technician achieves the Certificate in Sterilising Technology, it is not considered to be the end of their learning. The certificate identifies that the Technician has achieved the basic knowledge to allow them to be safe to work in a reprocessing environment. When a Technician becomes registered, they have a responsibility to keep their skills and knowledge current by actively engaging in relevant, on-going and continuing professional development. Ultimately, it is about contributing to high quality patient care.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is described as:

“Continuing professional development is a range of learning activities through which health professionals maintain and develop throughout their career to ensure that they retain their ability to practice safely and legally within their scope of practice” (Health Professions Council UK).

Therefore, the bi-annual registration process is for the Technician to demonstrate that they have continued their learning and development through self-directed learning and that such learning aids the Technician in ensuring that they meet the requirements of the New Zealand Sterile Services Association (NZSSA), scope of practice for Technicians. The professional body is seeking evidence that the Technician has put thought into their future learning and development, and how that fits in with their

vision of their future career pathway. The NZSSA are also looking for the technician to illustrate their learning and development through reflection upon their practice.

Where to now with Registration?

As identified, the registration process requires the Technician to demonstrate continuing professional development but in addition, needs to be able to withstand scrutiny under audit conditions and transcribe to the future.

The amendments to the process should occur in a stepped process. Step 1 shall commence as of 1st July 2017 and will continue as bi-annual registration until such a time as Step 2 is implemented which will be when the Diploma is offered.

New Registration Process - Step 1

This step applies to all Sterile Technicians holding a Certificate in Sterilising Technology Level 3 or advanced Certificate in Sterilising Technology Level 5.

The requirement is that all applications be submitted in a portfolio format either via mail or online and include:

- Completed application form.
- Verification of NZSSA membership being current.
- Current curriculum vitae of applicant.
- Copy of Professional Development Plan (PDP).
- Copy of professional development record.
- Evidence of continuing professional development.
- Confirmation of a minimum of 40 practice hours as a Sterilising Technician in a relevant environment e.g. CSSD, Endoscopy, Dental Clinic, Veterinary Practice, GP Clinic.
- Reflection of practice x 2 for level 5 Advanced Cert in Sterilising Technology applicants.
- Reflection of practice x 1 for level 3 Cert in Sterilising Technology applicants.

Professional Development Plan:

The PDP demonstrates that the Technician is consciously considering what is required for their self-development and that of their workplace. This can be taken from the applicant's workplace appraisal. The PDP can be for the previous year with evidence of achievement or for the following year signed off and agreed to by the applicant and their manager, team leader, supervisor or educator. If the plan is for a future period, it should detail how the applicant intends to achieve it. (See Appendix 1)

Evidence of continuing professional development:

In the past there has been concern that some Technicians have been disadvantaged because of geographical location and access to in-service education by exterior providers.

Therefore, the required education hours can now be achieved from a variety of sources under the following headings (see Appendix 2 for full details):

Work Based

Learning gained from work done in the professional environment.

Formal Education

Learning completed via external education provider.

Professional Activities

Knowledge and learning gained as a Sterile Technician.

Self-directed Learning

Learning under your own initiative relevant to professional practice and verified by your team educator or manager/leader

Professional Development Record:

This is where the applicant documents all the courses, workshops and other learning they have achieved since their last application for registration. This is the record presented to demonstrate that the required hours of on-going education and professional development has been met.

Exemplar or Reflection of Practice:

This a new concept for many technicians. So what is it.?

Putting it simply a reflection of practice is **“ALL ABOUT YOU”**.

- It is an example of a real story told to illustrate your practice or experience.
- It is a detailed description of the experience.
- Conveys something memorable, significant or important.
- It is not a case study.

An exemplar or reflection is about storytelling and has Greek origins. It is about knowing, knowledge and wisdom.

The story helps you and others learn and it helps make connections between events. Your story enhances the human experience.

What constitutes an Exemplar:

- An event or occurrence where the actions that you took directly or indirectly made a difference to the outcome.
- Stands out for you as an “AHA” moment.
- You learnt something.
- You suddenly understood –“the penny dropped”.
- A difference could be made.
- It started you thinking.
- Taxing upon you.
- Did or did not go well.

How is an exemplar written?

The exemplar should be written as:

- A narrative account.
- Written in plain language, no fancy technical jargon.
- Focused on the work you do.

Prior to writing you exemplar you should reflect on your work practice. Keep a journal if that helps you recall events. Perhaps have a list of possible stories and pick out the one or two that really struck a note with you. Consider whether those stories really reflect your experience. Once you have selected your story just start writing and writing whatever comes into your head. Jot down all the detail that you remember as you can then sort it out in the final document. Remember to allow yourself time and space to do this.

What should be included:

- Describe the background to your story.
- Detailed description of what happened.
- Why the event is significant to you.
- Why you were worried or concerned.
- Why you were thinking at the time.

- What you were feeling.
- What were the outcomes.
- What you found most demanding.
- What you found most satisfying.
- Did it go well or not so well.

Writing the final document:

- Write it down as you recall - remember it is your story.
- State what you actually did.
- Plain simple everyday language.
- Include a brief paragraph as to why this story interests **YOU**.
- Always write your story from a first person account. It's about **YOU** not others.
- Never use any one else's name or identifying details. It's not about them.
- No generalisations, rather simple and to the point.
- Please type your exemplar
- No more than 1-2 pages long.
- Most of all have fun writing it.