

# Proposed enrolled nurse standards of nursing competence

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**Te Kaunihera Tapuhi o Aotearoa**  
Nursing Council of New Zealand

# Board endorsed enrolled nurse scope

Enrolled nursing in Aotearoa New Zealand reflects knowledge, concepts, and worldviews of both tangata whenua and tangata tiriti. Enrolled nurses uphold and enact ngā mātāpono – principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, based within the kawa whakaruruhau framework for cultural safety, that promotes equity, inclusion, diversity, and rights of Māori as tangata whenua.

Enrolled nurses are accountable and responsible for their nursing practice, ensuring that all health services they provide are consistent with their education and assessed competence, legislative requirements, and are supported by appropriate standards. This includes the right of Pacific peoples and all population groups to access quality service that are culturally safe and responsive.

The enrolled nurse works in partnership and collaboration with the health consumer, their whānau, communities, and the wider healthcare team to deliver equitable person/ whānau/ whakapapa-centred nursing care, advocacy, and health promotion across the life span in all settings. An enrolled nurse's practice is informed by their level of educational preparation and practice experience and may include a leadership or coordination role within the healthcare team.

Enrolled nurses partner with people receiving health and/or disability support services to initiate care, monitor, and enhance health status through nursing assessments, care planning, implementation, and evaluation of care. Enrolled nurses work with access to and seek, when appropriate, guidance from a registered nurse or other registered health practitioner.\*

\*A health practitioner is a person who is registered under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 – for example a midwife, medical practitioner or occupational therapist.

**This scope will not come into effect until gazetted by the Council.**

***For the avoidance of doubt in other legislation where nurse is defined, this scope of practice includes general nursing and nursing functions.***

# Proposed standards of nursing competence – enrolled nurse

Under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (the Act), the role of Te Kaunihera Tapuhi o Aotearoa Nursing Council of New Zealand (the Council) is to protect the health and safety of the public by providing mechanisms to ensure that nurses are competent and fit to practise.

These mechanisms include setting scopes of practice and standards of competence for the nursing profession. A scope of practice statement describes the general nature of the nursing role and is broad rather than prescriptive. Standards of competence (also known as competencies) define the combination of skills, knowledge, behaviours, values, and abilities that underpin effective performance as a nurse.

Standards of competence are used to:

- inform nursing education curriculums
- assess nursing students before registration
- assess nurses returning to the workforce
- assess overseas nurses looking to work in Aotearoa New Zealand
- assess the ongoing competence of nurses.

The Council has developed these standards in collaboration with the nursing profession to ensure public confidence and safety are maintained. These standards reflect nurses' expectations of each other and describe what whānau, communities and the public can expect of nurses.

The standards are designed to a level that enables every enrolled nurse to apply them in the practice context where they work. The descriptors provide depth and context to the standards and support enrolled nurses to identify and develop quality practice in a range of settings.

The standards of nursing competence for enrolled nurses consist of five pou, which serve as symbols of strength and support. These pou include descriptors of quality nursing and outline what is required to practise safely as an enrolled nurse in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Pou is an important symbol in Māori culture. Its identity, meaning and significance reflect the deep connection that Māori have to their land and traditions. The pou in this context tells a story of the core values of nursing and the connection with a Māori world view.

## The use of Māori kupu (words)

The Council has included Māori kupu (words) and concepts within the proposed standards of competence. In consultation with our Māori rōpū from the enrolled and registered nurse design groups, the preference is to avoid direct translations. Therefore, pou have Māori kupu and English words, which are not intended to be a translation of each other, rather to add depth and meaning.

## Acknowledging regional differences

We acknowledge that there are regional differences in the meaning of kupu Māori. Māori are not a homogenous culture; while there are many common threads, themes, and links, there are also many differences. Different dialects of te reo Māori often build on regional differences between Māori in various parts of Aotearoa. For example, the meaning of pou in Te Arawa means anchor, while in other regions, it means pillar.

The understanding of the diversity within Māori culture is essential as we strive to uphold the standards of nursing competence and honour the unique cultural heritage and perspectives of Māori across Aotearoa.

## Non direct clinical nursing roles

Practice is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical care. Nursing practice extends to any role where the nurse uses their nursing skills and knowledge. Practice includes working in a non-clinical relationship with people, working in coordination, administration, clinical education, advisory roles or other roles that impact on safe, effective delivery of services. Enrolled nurses are responsible for their own practice and work in collaborative relationships with other health care professionals.

## Enrolled nurse standards of nursing competence

There are five pou (standards) for the enrolled nurse standards of nursing competence. These pou describe the competence required to practice safely as an enrolled nurse in New Zealand.

Evidence of safety to practise as an enrolled nurse is demonstrated when the applicant meets the following pou:

### Pou One: Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Giving effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi in nursing practice requires enrolled nurses to support the right of Māori to exercise self-determination for health and wellbeing. Enrolled nurses understand and recognise the status of tangata whenua in Aotearoa New Zealand, which includes the importance of kawa whakaruruhau. They work with individuals and whānau to achieve equitable healthcare outcomes.

### Pou Two: Cultural safety

Cultural safety in nursing practice ensures enrolled nurses provide culturally safe care to all people. This requires nurses to understand their own cultural identity, and its impact on professional practice, including the potential for a power imbalance between the nurse and the recipient of care.

### Pou Three: Knowledge informed practice

Knowledge informed practice requires enrolled nurses to apply knowledge and clinical expertise to enable assessment, clinical decision-making, and provision of safe quality nursing practice for individuals, whānau and communities. They integrate clinical and cultural expertise, recognising people's unique values and circumstances to improve health outcomes.

### Pou Four: Professional accountability and responsibility

Professional accountability and responsibility in nursing practice requires enrolled nurses to provide nursing care within professional, ethical and legal boundaries, that promote safe quality nursing practice by ensuring the rights, confidentiality, dignity and respect for people are upheld.

### Pou Five: Partnership and collaboration

Partnership and collaboration within the context of nursing practice requires enrolled nurses to work with individuals, their whānau, communities, and the interprofessional health care team across the life span in all settings.

# Standards of nursing competence – enrolled nurse

To meet continuing competence requirements, enrolled nurses do not need to provide evidence for each individual descriptor. However, evidence of the quality of their practice needs to be sufficient to reflect each pou.

## Pou One: Te Tiriti o Waitangi

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The descriptors below reflect the requirements for enrolled nurses working in partnership with Māori.

<i>Descriptor 1.1</i>	Engages in professional development related to Māori health, and the relevance of Te Tiriti o Waitangi articles and principles to the health outcomes for all.
<i>Descriptor 1.2</i>	Understands the effect of colonisation and social determinants on health for Māori and their whānau.
<i>Descriptor 1.3</i>	Challenges racism and discrimination in the delivery of nursing and healthcare.
<i>Descriptor 1.4</i>	Uses te reo and incorporates tikanga Māori into practice, as appropriate.
<i>Descriptor 1.5</i>	Establishes effective therapeutic relationships with individuals and whānau recognising the importance of whanaungatanga and manaakitanga on collective wellbeing.

## Pou Two: Cultural safety

Cultural safety in nursing practice ensures enrolled nurses provide culturally safe care to all people. This requires nurses to understand their own cultural identity, and its impact on professional practice, including the potential for a power imbalance between the nurse and the recipient of care.

The descriptors below identify the requirements to ensure culturally safe nursing practice.

<i>Descriptor 2.1</i>	Practises culturally safe care which is determined by the recipient.
<i>Descriptor 2.2</i>	Creates equitable relationships with individuals and whānau in the provision of healthcare.
<i>Descriptor 2.3</i>	Advocates for individuals and whānau, by including their cultural, spiritual, physical, and mental health to provide whakapapa centred care.
<i>Descriptor 2.4</i>	Contributes to a collaborative team culture which respects difference and diversity, protects cultural identity by acknowledging differing world views, values and practices.

## Pou Three: Knowledge informed practice

Knowledge informed practice requires enrolled nurses to apply knowledge and expertise to enable assessment, clinical decision-making, and provision of safe nursing care for individuals, whānau and communities. They integrate clinical and cultural expertise, recognising people's unique values and circumstances to improve health outcomes.

The descriptors below identify the requirements for the enrolled nurse to demonstrate safe quality care.

<i>Descriptor 3.1</i>	Promotes health behaviours and provides health education to support people achieve their health and wellness goals.
<i>Descriptor 3.2</i>	Undertakes a comprehensive nursing assessment incorporating scientific and nursing knowledge, clearly documents and initiates a plan of care, where appropriate with the healthcare team.
<i>Descriptor 3.3</i>	Demonstrates nursing knowledge and experience to recognise when a person's condition has deteriorated or improved, escalating any identified findings.
<i>Descriptor 3.4</i>	Demonstrates digital health literacy and capability to support individuals, whānau and communities to use technology for promoting wellbeing and managing health concerns.
<i>Descriptor 3.5</i>	Demonstrates safe and effective administration of medicines in accordance with local and national policies.
<i>Descriptor 3.6</i>	Ensures individuals and whānau have adequate explanation of the effects, consequences and alternatives to proposed treatment options.
<i>Descriptor 3.7</i>	Applies infection prevention and control principles in accordance with local and national policies and best practice guidelines.
<i>Descriptor 3.8</i>	Demonstrates and supports sustainability practices and understands the importance of planetary health.

## Pou Four: Professional accountability and responsibility

Professional accountability and responsibility relate to the provision of nursing care within professional, ethical and legal boundaries, that promote quality nursing practice by ensuring the rights, confidentiality, dignity and respect for people are upheld.

The descriptors below identify the requirements for enrolled nurses to demonstrate accountability and responsibility for their nursing practice.

<i>Descriptor 4.1</i>	Works within legal and ethical requirements and accepts responsibility for actions and decision-making in accordance with level of competence.
<i>Descriptor 4.2</i>	Demonstrates understanding of professional responsibilities and adheres to the code of conduct, and organisational policies and procedures in the area of practice.
<i>Descriptor 4.3</i>	Ensures documentation is relevant, accurate, professional and timely.
<i>Descriptor 4.4</i>	Considers and responds to the health, safety and wellbeing of self and others to practise safely.

<i>Descriptor 4.5</i>	Reflects on own practice and engages in ongoing professional development and learning to meet continuing competence requirements.
<i>Descriptor 4.6</i>	Promotes a culture of safety and continuous quality improvement.
<i>Descriptor 4.7</i>	Demonstrates being an effective role model, preceptor and mentor as appropriate.

## **Pou Five: Partnership and collaboration**

Partnership and collaboration within the context of nursing practice requires enrolled nurses to work with individuals, their whānau, communities, and the interprofessional health care team across the life span in all settings.

The descriptors below identify the requirements for effective communication and working with the wider healthcare team.

<i>Descriptor 5.1</i>	Establishes and maintains respectful relationships with individuals, whānau and the healthcare team by using a range of communication strategies to ensure safe care.
<i>Descriptor 5.2</i>	Demonstrates an understanding of when to seek guidance and assistance from the healthcare team to inform decision making and provision of care.
<i>Descriptor 5.3</i>	Demonstrates leadership, direction, and coordination, as appropriate, to unregulated health workers.
<i>Descriptor 5.4</i>	Identifies, assesses and responds to emerging risks and challenging situations by adjusting priorities and escalating appropriately.

# Glossary of terms

<b>Accountability</b>	Being answerable for own decisions and actions.
<b>Aiga</b>	Aiga is a Samoan term that means a person belonging to a family, village, and nation. It's a sense of belonging and where genealogy and history intertwines. <sup>1</sup>
<b>Appropriate</b>	Matching the circumstances of a situation or meeting the needs of the individual or group.
<b>Assessment</b>	(Of skill or competence). A systematic procedure for collecting evidence to describe progress and ascertain deviations from expected outcomes and achievements.
<b>Carers</b>	Individuals, family, whānau and aiga providing care for someone close to them who needs additional assistance with their everyday living because of a disability, health condition, illness or injury. <sup>2</sup>
<b>Cultural Safety</b>	<p>Cultural safety in New Zealand was developed in response to Māori experiences of poor health care that has evolved into two philosophical perspectives (kawa whakaruruhau and cultural safety), with Te Tiriti o Waitangi remaining the framework to develop and progress these perspectives for nursing education and practice.<sup>3</sup></p> <p>Cultural safety relates to the experience of the recipient of nursing service and extends beyond cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity. It provides recipients of nursing services with the power to comment on practices and contribute to the achievement of positive health outcomes and experiences. It also enables them to participate in changing any negatively perceived or experienced service.<sup>4</sup></p>
<b>Collaborate</b>	Work together, co-operate with each other.
<b>Competence</b>	The combination of skills, knowledge, attitudes, values and abilities that underpin effective performance as a nurse.
<b>Competency</b>	A defined area of skilled performance.
<b>Competent</b>	The person has competence across all domains of competencies applicable to the nurse, at a standard that is judged to be appropriate for the level of nurse being assessed.
<b>Health care assistant</b>	A person employed within a healthcare, residential or community context who undertakes a component of direct care and who is not regulated in law by a regulatory authority. Kaiāwhina is a te reo Māori term that describes the over-arching term to describe non-regulated roles in the health and disability sector. The term does not replace specific role titles such as healthcare assistant, orderly, mental health support worker. <sup>5</sup>

1 Efi, T. A. T. T. (2009). Su'esu'e manogi, In search of fragrance: Tui atua Tamasese Ta'isi and the Samoan Indigenous reference. National University of Samoa..p 80 & 105.

2 <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/carers-in-new-zealand>

3 Barton, P (2023). Kawa whakaruruhau – cultural safety: he kōrero nā Tākuta Irihapeti Ramsden.

4 <https://online.flippingbook.com/view/960779225/>

5 <https://kaiawhinaplan.org.nz/>



<b>Health inequity</b>	Health inequities are systematic differences in the health status of different population groups. These inequities have significant social and economic costs both to individuals and societies. <sup>6</sup>
<b>Kawa whakaruruhau</b>	Kawa whakaruruhau – cultural safety, was primarily developed as a means to address the power relationship and attitudinal change of nurses when caring for Māori and was considered a reciprocal obligation of accountability and responsibility within the context of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Subsequently, cultural safety has changed to include all minority groups, while kawa whakaruruhau remained focused on cultural safety within a Māori context and equitable health outcomes for Māori. <sup>7</sup>
<b>Legislated</b>	Those requirements laid down by New Zealand Acts and regulations.
<b>Manaaki</b>	To support, take care of, give hospitality to, protect, look out for - show respect, generosity and care for others. <sup>8</sup>
<b>Manaakitanga</b>	Manaakitanga is a powerful way of expressing how Māori communities care about each other's wellbeing, nurture relationships, and engage with one another. Manaakitanga also extends to the whenua that needs care in order to ensure sustainability for future generations. The value of manaakitanga is often expressed through the responsibility to provide hospitality and protection. Manaakitanga derives from two words - 'mana' and 'aki'. Mana is a condition that holds everything in the highest regard. Aki means to uphold or support. Extending Manaakitanga requires respect, humility, kindness and honesty. <sup>9</sup> The practice of manaakitanga not only benefits the recipients of such care and generosity but also serves to maintain or enhance the mana of the giver.
<b>Mātauranga Māori</b>	Māori knowledge that covers a wide expanse of knowledge and understanding originating from tūpuna Māori (ancestors), including the Māori worldview and perspectives, Māori creativity, and cultural practices. <sup>10</sup>
<b>Nursing practice</b>	Using nursing knowledge in a direct relationship with people or working in nursing management, nursing administration, nursing education, nursing research, nursing professional advice or nursing policy development roles, which impacts on public safety.
<b>Pacific peoples</b>	Specifically referenced to acknowledge the unique whakapapa relationship with Māori and Pacific peoples sharing ancient whakapapa (genealogical) and cultural bonds through te Moana Nui a Kiwa (greater Oceania ancestral connections) <sup>11</sup> .
<b>Planetary health</b>	Planetary health recognises the interconnection between the health of the earth's natural systems and the wellbeing of human beings. It emphasises the need for sustainable practices and policies that protect both the environment and the health of current and future generations. <sup>12</sup>

6 <https://www.who.int/news-room/facts-in-pictures/detail/health-inequities-and-their-causes>

7 Barton, P (2023). Kawa whakaruruhau – cultural safety: he kōrero nā Tākuta Irihapeti Ramsden.

8 <https://maoridictionary.co.nz/word/3425>

9 <https://www.imsb.maori.nz/maori-wellbeing-in-tamaki-makaurau/manaakitanga/>

10 <https://www.takai.nz/find-resources/articles/matauranga-maori/>

11 Matika, M et al (2021). Māori and Pasifika language, identity, and wellbeing in Aotearoa New Zealand.

12 University of Technology Sydney (2023). Planetary Health, Climate Change and Sustainable Healthcare: Essential Knowledge and Skills for Nursing Students

<b>Partnership</b>	The health sector should engage with Māori to develop, deliver, and monitor services and programmes that reflect Māori needs and aspirations, and are designed to improve hauora Māori outcomes, reflecting a strong and enduring Te Tiriti partnership. <sup>13</sup>
<b>Pou</b>	A carved wooden post or pillar that serves as a symbol of strength and support. <sup>14</sup>
<b>Preceptor</b>	Experienced practitioner who provides supervision during clinical practice and facilitates the application of theory to practice for students and staff learners. Preceptorship is a clinical educational strategy where both the preceptor and preceptee work together for a specified period of time. The process of preceptorship involves teaching, learning and orientation to the clinical area.
<b>Reflection</b>	Reflection on practice has become an important part of nursing education and the continuing competence process. Reflection is linked to the skill of self-monitoring and involves purposefully paying attention to one's thoughts, feelings and judgements. The underlying argument is that reflecting on practice helps nurses to gain new insights, foster self-regulation, and contribute to the development of accountable professional practitioners. A lack of insight has been found to be a cue to unsafe practice and reflection has been identified as a component of, or precursor to, insight. Reflection has been defined in various ways but for the purposes of this guide, it is defined as the deliberate process of thinking through and interpreting one's thoughts, memories, actions and activities in order to make sense of them, learn from them and make changes if required. <sup>15</sup>
<b>Registered Health Practitioner</b>	A person who is registered under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003, e.g. midwife, medical practitioner, occupational therapist.
<b>Responsibility</b>	A charge or duty that arises from a person's role or status in a profession or organisation.
<b>Self-determination</b>	Enabling the right for Māori to be Māori and to exercise self-determination over their lives and to live on Māori terms according to Māori philosophies, values and practices, including tikanga Māori. <sup>9</sup>
<b>Social determinants</b>	Social determinants of health are the circumstances in people's environments in which people are born, grow up, live, learn, work and age, that can affect their health, wellbeing, and quality of life. <sup>16</sup>
<b>Tikanga</b>	Māori customary practices or behaviours. The concept is derived from the Māori word 'tika' which means 'right' or 'correct' so, in Māori terms, to act in accordance with tikanga is to behave in a way that is culturally proper or appropriate. <sup>17</sup>
<b>Te Tiriti o Waitangi</b>	The founding document for Aotearoa New Zealand signed in 1840 by the Māori people and the British Crown.
<b>Te ao Māori</b>	The Māori world, emphasises the importance of relationships between nature and people. It is a holistic worldview that focuses on interconnections and is grounded in tikanga customary values and lore and mātauranga knowledge. <sup>18</sup>

13 NCNZ (2023) Te Tiriti O Waitangi Policy

14 <https://teara.govt.nz/en/te-waonui-a-tane-forest-mythology/page-4>

15 NZNO (2021). Reflective writing.

16 <https://healthify.nz/healthcare-providers/s/social-determinants-of-health/>

17 <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/maori-hub/rauemi/tikanga-tips>

18 <https://www.otago.ac.nz/maori/world>

<b>Whānau</b>	Whānau is often translated as 'family', but its meaning is more complex. It includes physical, emotional and spiritual dimensions and is based on whakapapa. Whānau can be multi-layered, flexible and dynamic. Whānau is based on a Māori and a tribal world view. It is through the whānau that values, histories and traditions from the ancestors are adapted for the contemporary world. <sup>19</sup>
<b>Whakawhanaungatanga</b>	(noun) process of establishing relationships, relating well to others. <sup>20</sup>
<b>Whakapapa</b>	Genealogy, genealogical table, lineage, descent - reciting whakapapa was, and is, an important skill and reflected the importance of genealogies in Māori society in terms of leadership, land and fishing rights, kinship and status. It is central to all Māori institutions. <sup>21</sup>
<b>Whakapapa centred care</b>	The meaning of 'whakapapa-centred' care in the scope's use of this term is derived from whānau centred <sup>22</sup> - person, whānau, whakapapa-centred care is collaborative health care focused on meeting the needs, values, and desired outcomes of individuals, whānau, and future generations. It describes how this is referred to and acknowledges the longer term, multi-generational impacts, and outcomes (positive and negative) of nursing care and support. <sup>23</sup>
<b>Whanaungatanga</b>	Relationships and connections are central to Māori and Māori wellbeing. Whanaungatanga is about forming and maintaining relationships and strengthening ties between kin and communities. This value is the essential glue that binds people together, providing the foundation for a sense of unity, belonging and cohesion. <sup>24</sup>
<b>Whenua</b>	The Māori word for land, also means placenta. <sup>25</sup> Local people, hosts, indigenous people - people born of the whenua, i.e. of the placenta and of the land where the people's ancestors have lived and where their placenta are buried. <sup>26</sup>

<sup>19</sup> <https://teara.govt.nz/en/whanau-maori-and-family/print>

<sup>20</sup> <https://maoridictionary.co.nz/word/12711>

<sup>21</sup> <https://maoridictionary.co.nz/search?&keywords=whakapapa>

<sup>22</sup> Families Commission. (2010)

<sup>23</sup> Whānau Strategic Framework. (2009–2012).

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.imsb.maori.nz/maori-wellbeing-in-tamaki-makaurau/whanaungatanga/>

<sup>25</sup> <https://teara.govt.nz/en/papatuanuku-the-land/page-4>

<sup>26</sup> <https://maoridictionary.co.nz/search?&keywords=whenua>