

Frequently Asked Questions – Limited Registration/Enrolment

(A) Eligibility

1) Who is eligible to apply for limited registration/enrolment under the Nurses Registration Ordinance, Cap. 164, Laws of Hong Kong?

Nurses trained outside Hong Kong who meet the following criteria should be eligible to apply for limited registration/enrolment:

- (a) have obtained a qualification outside Hong Kong and the curriculum of the programme leading to the award of the qualification is broadly comparable to the curriculum of the programme of a recognised training course;
(i.e. have completed a pre-qualification general/psychiatric nursing programme of normally not less than three years (for registration) or two years (for enrolment));
- (b) possess a valid certificate to practise general/psychiatric nursing issued by a certifying body recognised by the Nursing Council of Hong Kong from time to time as constituting sufficient evidence of the applicant's competency to practise nursing;
- (c) have been selected for full-time employment as a person with limited registration/enrolment in a designated institution;
(for list of designated institutions, please refer to Question 2)
- (d) have at least one year of full-time post-qualification clinical experience that is relevant to the employment; and
- (e) are of good character and have good professional conduct.

2) What are designated institutions that can employ non-locally trained nurses under limited registration/enrolment?

At present, these designated institutions include –

- (i) Department of Health;
- (ii) Hospital Authority;
- (iii) A training school as accredited by the Nursing Council of Hong Kong ;
- (iv) A residential care home under the Residential Care Homes (Elderly Persons) Ordinance, Cap. 459, Laws of Hong Kong;
- (v) A residential care home for PWDs under the Residential Care Homes (Persons with Disabilities) Ordinance, Cap. 613, Laws of Hong Kong; and
- (vi) A scheduled nursing home within the meaning of the Private Healthcare Facilities Ordinance, Cap. 633, Laws of Hong Kong.

3) Can an applicant apply for exemption from any of the eligibility criteria?

No exemption will be granted.

4) Does the Nursing Council of Hong Kong (“the Council”) establish a list of recognised non-local nursing qualifications?

No, the Council assesses each application on an individual basis with regard to the theoretical and clinical training hours and contents of the nursing training programme completed by the applicant. The curriculum of the non-local programme should be broadly comparable to the curriculum of an accredited nursing programme in Hong Kong.

5) If the nursing programme completed by the applicant is not broadly comparable to the curriculum of an accredited nursing programme in Hong Kong, what should the applicant do?

For those applicants who do not meet the Nursing Council of Hong Kong (“the Council”)’s requirements, the Council may consider, on a discretionary basis, whether to take the applicants’ post-qualification training / clinical experience into consideration, on a case-by-case basis.

6) Can an applicant apply for limited registration/enrolment right after graduation outside Hong Kong?

No, an applicant should possess a valid certificate to practise nursing issued by a certifying body recognised by the Nursing Council of Hong Kong from time to time, and have at least one year of full-time post-qualification clinical experience that is relevant to the employment.

(B) Application Procedures

7) How does a nurse trained outside Hong Kong apply for limited registration/enrolment?

An applicant should submit the duly completed application form for limited registration/enrolment together with originals and photocopies or notarised copies that are duly legalised/authenticated (i.e. a copy of the original document certified by a qualified person, such as practicing lawyer, notary public, etc.) of the following documents (either in person or by post) to the applicant's employing institution:

- (i) Hong Kong Identity Card/Passport
- (ii) Nursing graduation certificate
- (iii) Valid certificate to practise nursing from the registration authority outside Hong Kong
 - (i.e. (i) practising certificate or other equivalent documentary evidence of entitlement to practise nursing outside Hong Kong; and
 - (ii) registration/enrolment certificate or official document from the registration authority outside Hong Kong verifying the applicant's "date of initial registration/enrolment".)
- (iv) Documentary proof(s) certifying that the applicant possessed at least one year of full-time post-qualification clinical experience issued and/or certified by the applicant's employer(s)
- (v) Two unmounted copies of a photograph (passport size) of the applicant taken not more than two years before the date of application

The employing institution should certify the application and submit the application to the Nursing Council of Hong Kong on behalf of the applicant.

8) Can an applicant submit application directly to the Nursing Council of Hong Kong?

No. Only submission via the employing institution will be accepted.

9) Is an applicant required to pay any application fee?

No application fee is required. Upon approval for limited registration/enrolment, an applicant will be required to pay the prescribed fees for registration/enrolment of HK\$1,190 and practising certificate of HK\$230 in accordance with the Nurses (Registration and Disciplinary Procedure) Regulations and Enrolled Nurses (Enrolment and Disciplinary Procedure) Regulations. The fees are subject to revision.

10) What is the deadline of application?

Applications are accepted and processed all year around.

(C) Vetting Procedures

11) How long does it take before an applicant receives the result of his/her application?

Upon receipt of the application submitted by the employing institution, “Verification of Training Details” (i.e. Form 1(a)) and “Verification of Original Registration/Enrolment Outside Hong Kong” (i.e. Form 1(b)), the Nursing Council of Hong Kong conducts checking on the information and seeks clarification with the employing institution when necessary. It is expected that employing institution will be notified of the result in three months’ time, subject to submission of completed and correct applications. Partially or incorrectly completed applications will incur delay in processing.

12) If an application is incomplete or contains inconsistent information, will the applicant be notified?

If the application is incomplete or contains inconsistent information, the Nursing Council of Hong Kong will require the applicant/employing institution to provide supplementary information and/or clarify the discrepancy. This will result in prolonged processing time of the application.

13) Can the Nursing Administration of an employing institution, instead of the Human Resources Management, certify and complete the application form for its potential employees?

Yes. Authorised person(s) appointed by the employing institutions, including but not limited to Human Resources Management and supervisors who are responsible for handling matters relating to the applications, can certify the corresponding documents and complete the application form as appropriate.

(D) Others

14) What is the validity period of the limited registration/enrolment of a nurse?

The limited registration/enrolment will take effect from a date specified by the Nursing Council of Hong Kong, and last for a period not exceeding three years. The validity period will be specified in the practising certificate.

15) When will the limited registration/enrolment of a nurse expire?

The limited registration/enrolment of a nurse is in force until the earliest of the following –

- (a) the expiry of the employment period not exceeding three years;
- (b) the termination of the person's employment in the designated institution; or
- (c) the removal of the person's name from the register/roll of nurses under an order made by the Nursing Council of Hong Kong.

16) How can an applicant enquire his/her application status?

The Nursing Council of Hong Kong will normally inform the respective employing institutions directly about any outstanding action of the applications (e.g. provision of incomplete information or clarification for inconsistent information). They will also be notified directly about the results of applications. An applicant should approach the person's employing institution for any enquiries about the application status.

17) Where can the public obtain information on the list of nurses with limited registration/enrolment?

List of nurses with limited registration/enrolment is available on the website of the Nursing Council of Hong Kong.

18) Can a nurse trained outside Hong Kong apply for both limited registration/enrolment and special registration/enrolment?

No. An applicant is eligible for limited registration/enrolment or special registration/enrolment after being selected for full-time employment as a person with either limited registration/enrolment or special registration/enrolment in a designated or specified institution.

19) Is a nurse with limited registration/enrolment eligible for full registration/enrolment after a specified period of time?

No. A nurse with limited registration/enrolment is not eligible for full registration/enrolment unless the person passes the Nursing Council Licensing Examination.

20) Is a nurse with limited registration/enrolment eligible for migrating to special registration/enrolment after a specified period of time?

No. A nurse with limited registration/enrolment is not eligible for migrating to special registration/enrolment or any other type of registration/enrolment. The person, who meets the criteria for special registration/enrolment, could submit a fresh application for special registration/enrolment.

(for the eligibility of special registration/enrolment, please refer to the Question 1 of the FAQ for Special Registration/Enrolment)

21) Can a nurse with limited registration/enrolment change the employment institution during the validity period of the limited registration/enrolment?

No. The validity of the limited registration/enrolment will be expired upon the termination of the person's employment in the designated institution. The nurse should make a fresh application for limited registration/enrolment through the new designated institution with full-time employment.

22) Can a nurse with limited registration/enrolment change the area of nursing practice within the same designated institution during the validity period of the limited registration/enrolment?

No. A nurse with limited registration/enrolment is required to work in the area of nursing practice as imposed by the Nursing Council of Hong Kong within the same designated institution.

23) What should the employing institution do if it has changed its organisational name?

If the employing institution has changed its organisational name, it should report the change(s) with documentary proof by post or email within 30 days from the date of change for review of the Nursing Council of Hong Kong.

24) What should the employing institution do if it has ceased its business?

If the employing institution has ceased its business, it should notify the Nursing Council of Hong Kong by post or email immediately.

25) What should the employing institution do if the employment of the nurse with limited registration / enrolment has been terminated?

The employing institution should notify the Nursing Council of Hong Kong by submitting the supporting document (e.g. letter on termination of employment) by post or email immediately.

Note: If there is any inconsistency or ambiguity between the English version and the Chinese version, the English version shall prevail.