



# Certified Practicing Nutritionist Certification/Credentialing Policy

Next Review Date: February 2028

**Purpose:** The Practitioner Credentialing Policy ensures that Certified Practicing Nutritionists meet the necessary professional competence and personal attributes to provide safe and effective services. This policy outlines the process for initial credentialing and re-credentialing.

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## 1. Scope of application

The Certified Practicing Nutritionist credentialing program is the trademarked certification program of The Australasian Association and Register of Practicing Nutritionists (AARPN).



## 2. Freedom of Association

The Certified Practicing Nutritionist (CPN) credentialing program operates independently of AARPN association membership. Applicants are not required to be members of AARPN to obtain CPN credentialing. This separation is consistent with the Fair Work Act 2009.

Clinically trained Nutritionists who hold a relevant degree from an AARPN-recognised or accredited program and who are seeking CPN credentialing only (i.e., without AARPN membership) must hold and maintain active accreditation as a Nutritionist with a TGA Schedule 1 facilitating professional association for the duration of their CPN-only credentialing with AARPN.

## 3. Definitions

**Australian Qualifications Framework** means the educational degree specifications outlined in the Australian Government Department of Education and Training 'Country Education Profiles' document.

**Certified Practicing Nutritionist (CPN)** is an individual who has been evaluated and credentialed by the AARPN Certification Committee as meeting all the requirements for credentialing as a "Certified Practicing Nutritionist". Exclusions: Persons holding Naturopathic qualifications or practicing as Naturopaths (including those Naturopathic Practitioners holding separate qualifications in Human Nutrition, Clinical Nutrition/Nutritional Medicine) are explicitly excluded from membership of AARPN and from obtaining credentialing as a Certified Practicing Nutritionist.

The **Certified Practicing Nutritionist (CPN) Credentialing Program** refers to a rigorous credentialing process overseen by the AARPN Certification Committee, a subsidiary committee of The Australasian Association and Register of Practicing Nutritionists (AARPN) Ltd. This program ensures that credentialed individuals meet, and continue to uphold, the highest standards of professional practice within the allied health sector. It provides a pathway for degree-qualified, clinically trained Nutritionists to attain professional recognition and establish their eligibility to practice as Certified Practicing Nutritionists in the allied health field. The program entails a comprehensive evaluation of candidates including their educational qualifications, clinical practicum experience, and English proficiency (where appropriate), and audit of their compliance with professional practice standards. The following are subject to annual 100 percent audit: mandatory declarations including fitness to practice and compliance with Continuing Professional Development requirements. The following are subject to monthly 100 percent audit of currency: Professional Indemnity and Public and Products Liability insurance, First Aid certification, Working With Children Checks, and

where applicable NDIS checks. Additionally, CPNs must continuously adhere to the Certified Practicing Nutritionist Code of Conduct – Practice Guidelines, and the Code of Conduct – Ethics, and these include adhering to the scope of practice of a CPN as set out in the Scope of Practice Statement and supported by the Professional Standards document.

## 4. Credentialing requirements

### 4.1. Education qualifications

Practitioners seeking credentialing as a Certified Practicing Nutritionist must demonstrate completion of an AARPN accredited/approved education program equivalent to Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Level 7 or higher. This may include bachelor's degrees or master's degrees.

### 4.2. Assessment of competence to practice

The following methods are used for assessment of practitioner competence to practice:

- Course accreditation in line with the Certified Practicing Nutritionist Course Accreditation policy. (All accredited programs include extensive supervised clinical practicum that ensures students are safe and competent practitioners prior to graduation. Students that fail to meet minimum requirements for safe and competent practice do not graduate.)
- Validated procedure conducted by the AARPN Certification Committee against entry level Certified Practicing Nutritionist Professional Competency Standards for 'Resumption of Practice'.

### 4.3a. Initial Credentialing – Full Certification

At the time of initial credentialing, the following documentation must be submitted:

- **Qualifications:** Certified copies of academic transcripts and conferred qualifications. This may include digital evidence of program completion that will then be validated by the AARPN Certification Committee. Documents in non-English languages must be submitted with certified translations and the VetAssess outcome (<https://www.vetassess.com.au>) for equivalency with Australian qualifications.
- **Certified Proof of Identity:** The current requirement is the *AARPN Certified Identity Document Template* for all CPNs. This identity document utilises the government myID *My Identity* screen or the *PRODA profile*, in conjunction with the Drivers Licence (licence number redacted) or photographic WWCC, which are then applied to the template and the template certified on presentation of the original source documents (electronic or physical) to the certifier. The *AARPN Certified Identity Document Template* can be found on the AARPN website. AARPN additionally holds on file the Insurance Certificate of Currency, the First Aid Certification certificate, and the Working With Children Check (WWCC) clearance of all its CPNs. The Working With Children Check or Blue Card is the product of a government validated 100-point ID process that includes certified name change documents. Details of the holder can be validated using the check number on the certificate of clearance/blue card.
- **Certification History and Eligibility:** For internationally trained practitioners, certification history from the country of education is required. For practitioners applying for CPN only credentialing, certified copies of association membership certificates and TGA Schedule 1 Exemption Certificates.
- **English Language Proficiency:** Compliance with English language skills must be demonstrated if English is a second language and the qualification has not been obtained from an Australian University/Institute/College.

- **Recency of Practice:** Compliance with 'Recency of Practice' requirements must be demonstrated.
- **Compliance** with AARPN polices regarding use of social media and service bundling must be demonstrated – this is determined by the AARPN Certification Committee via social media and website and broad internet audit.

### 4.3b. Initial Credentialing – Provisional Certification

At the time of initial credentialing, the applicant may elect to apply for or may be directed by the AARPN Certification Committee to apply for, provisional certification. The following documents and information are required for provisional certification:

- **Qualifications:** Certified copies of academic transcripts and conferred qualifications. This may include digital evidence of program completion that will then be validated by the AARPN Certification Committee. Documents in non-English languages must be submitted with certified translations and the VetAssess outcome (<https://www.vetassess.com.au>) for equivalency with Australian qualifications.
- **Certified Proof of Identity:** The current requirement is the *AARPN Certified Identity Document Template* for all CPNs. This identity document utilises the government myID *My Identity* screen or the *PRODA profile*, in conjunction with the Drivers Licence (licence number redacted) or photographic WWCC, which are then applied to the template and the template certified on presentation of the original source documents (electronic or physical) to the certifier. The *AARPN Certified Identity Document Template* can be found on the AARPN website. AARPN additionally holds on file the Insurance Certificate of Currency, the First Aid Certification certificate, and the Working With Children Check (WWCC) clearance of all its CPNs. The Working With Children Check or Blue Card is the product of a government validated 100-point ID process that includes certified name change documents. Details of the holder can be validated using the check number on the certificate of clearance/blue card.
- **Certification History and Eligibility:** For internationally trained practitioners, certification history from the country of education is required. For practitioners applying for CPN only credentialing, certified copies of association membership certificates and TGA Schedule 1 Exemption Certificates.
- **English Language Proficiency:** Compliance with English language skills must be demonstrated if English is a second Language and the qualification has not been obtained from an Australian University/Institute/College.

Provisional Certification enables established practitioners to engage with the Certified Practicing Nutritionist program while:

- (a) working through resumption of practice requirements (as per the Certified Practicing Nutritionist Resumption of Practice policy) or
- (b) working to become compliant with AARPN's polices regarding use of social media and service bundling (as per the Certified Practicing Nutritionist Code of Conduct – Practice Guidelines).

Provisional certification extends for a maximum period of 12 months at which time resumption of practice requirements or compliance requirements around marketing and social media must be met (respectively). Provisional CPNs that fail to meet requirements, will be notified by the AARPN Certification Committee of its intent to cease their provisional certification and must demonstrate to the AARPN Board 'why cessation should not occur'. Provisional CPNs must not utilise the CPN trademark and must declare their provisional status with any reference made to Certified Practicing Nutritionist.

## 5. Mandatory declarations

Prior to obtaining certification, applicants must declare 'Yes' or 'No' to the following:

1. Have you ever had any professional membership refused, suspended or withdrawn?
2. Have you been subject to action of disciplinary nature relating to complementary medicine or allied health?
3. Have you been investigated or currently under investigation or have an investigation pending for offences against children?
4. Have you been convicted of, or served any part of, a term of imprisonment, for any civil, criminal or police offence in Australia or overseas? (This excludes traffic fines that did not proceed to court)
5. Have you entered into a recognised arrangement which is still in force, in relation to any offence?
6. Have you a charge pending for any offence?

Additionally, applicants must declare their:

7. Commitment to comply with the Certified Practicing Nutritionist Code of Conduct/Ethics/Practice Standards, and all other Certified Practicing Nutritionist standards and guidelines and information available on the AARPN website.
8. Compliance with Fitness to Practice requirements.
9. Compliance with CPD requirements.
10. Consent to the use of professional and personal information to meet reporting obligations to government and to the private health insurance industry.
11. Compliance with privacy laws.
12. Confirmation that all information provided is true and correct.
13. Agreement to notify the AARPN Certification Committee of any changes in their circumstances as soon as practicable.
14. Full understanding and agreement to the Terms and Conditions for Membership/CPN credentialing - such as they are described in the documents and information contained on the AARPN website.

## 6. Recertification

Practitioner recertification is conducted annually. Practitioners seeking recertification that cannot meet recertification requirements will revert to provisional status for a maximum period of 3 months upon which they are required to be fully compliant. The exception to this 3-month period are practitioners engaging with Resumption of Practice, for which a 12-month period applies within which compliance must be realised. During this period of enforced provisional status, practitioners will be monitored for compliance by the AARPN Certification Committee and will be supported where appropriate with peer-to-peer mentoring and a professional supervisory arrangement approved by the AARPN Certification Committee. Practitioners granted provisional certification must not display the CPN trademark and must declare their provisional status with any use of Certified Practicing Nutritionist. Any practitioner who fails to demonstrate compliance for re-certification due to a criminal conduct matter (apart from minor traffic infringements) will have their certification withheld until cleared.

## 7. Recertification

At recertification, practitioners must submit:

1. Certified proof of name change (if applicable).

2. A new mandatory declaration as per above including but not limited to confirmation of Fitness to Practice, Recency of Practice, and commitment to compliance with the AARPN Code of Conduct/Practice Guidelines/Ethics/Practice Standards and all other and all other Certified Practicing Nutritionist standards and guidelines and information available on the AARPN website.
3. Evidence of meeting Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements.
4. And, hold current First Aid Certification, Working With Children Clearance, and Professional Indemnity Insurance.

## 8. Continuing certification requirements

To maintain certification as a Certified Practicing Nutritionist, a CPN must continuously hold current First Aid Certification, Working With Children Check clearance, and Professional Indemnity Insurance – failure to do so results in a compliance suspension and removal from private health insurance provider lists. The status of the CPN will display as 'inactive' (via the living certificate of CPN certification) until such time as compliance is again achieved.

## 9. Support for newly certified and resuming practitioners

At the time of initial certification, newly certified practitioners may receive additional support through supervision, mentoring, and monitoring by experienced peers. This support is also extended to practitioners in the Resumption of Practice pathway.

## 10. Use of the Certified Practicing Nutritionist nomenclature and CPN trademark

Retired and Student members and Provisional CPNs cannot use the CPN trademark, or the title Certified Practicing Nutritionist. Only fully certified CPNs can use the nomenclature Certified Practicing Nutritionist and use the CPN trademark.