



The Society of Cardiopulmonary Technology (NZ) Inc

c/o Cardiac Physiology, Level3, Auckland City Hospital, Private Bag 92024, Auckland 1142, New Zealand. www.sct.org.nz
Telephone (09) 307-4949 extn. 24323. Email: education.sct@gmail.com

Guide for Recruitment of Cardiac Physiology Technicians and Cardiac Physiologists

The Society of Cardiopulmonary Technology (NZ) Inc or SCT, is the professional body which sets the standards of practice and minimum qualifications and experience for working as a cardiac physiology technician or cardiac physiologist in NZ. The two roles have different training pathways and scopes of practice.

This is a guide for charge physiologists, managers and the human resource departments/people and capability services, to assist in the recruitment of suitable applicants to the cardiac physiology profession. If you require more information, advice or wish to request support during interviews please contact SCT.

Website: <https://www.sct.org.nz>

Email: info@sct.org.nz

SCT is registered by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) as a Private Training Establishment.

The Clinical Physiologist Registration Board (CPRB) manages the registration and annual practicing certificates (APC) for this profession (along with respiratory, sleep, neurophysiology, renal, exercise physiologists). The APC renewal date for the profession is the 1st May.

Website: <https://cprb.org.nz>

Section 1: Training and Employment within New Zealand

Cardiac Physiology Technician

A cardiac physiology technician typically performs 12 lead ECG recording, ambulatory monitor (Holter/event/blood pressure) fitting, removal/downloading and exercise tolerance testing (monitoring role). They are required to assess ECG recordings to identify the significance of the ECG findings and apply clinical judgement and act accordingly. They may also perform non cardiac tasks in their daily work, e.g. spirometry.

Entry requirements: A minimum of NCEA Level 2 (60 credits at level 2, plus 20 credits at any level, plus literacy and numeracy credit requirements at level 1), including a pass in one of the following: Biology, Chemistry, Physics or Science.

Employment Requirements: The trainee is required to be employed with a job title that reflects the technical nature of the role (e.g. trainee cardiac physiology technician). The employing hospital must have sufficient qualified cardiac physiology technicians or cardiac physiologists available to carry out the training plus access to the required procedures. An agreement may be made with a nearby larger centre to provide support for those training at remote or smaller hospitals. SCT issues accreditation for training of cardiac physiology technicians to hospitals that meet the staffing and procedure requirements.

Qualification: The Certificate of Physiological Measurement (CPM)* is a one-year qualification offered by SCT, which is delivered by online learning and covers the theory and practical aspects of this role. The CPM course may be started at any time throughout the year and requires a clinical supervisor who is employed in a technical role, is a member of SCT and is competent to perform the practical training. Remote or smaller hospitals may appoint a clinical supervisor from a nearby larger hospital to oversee the training. The CPM qualification is awarded once the CPM course has been completed and the trainee has attained one year of full-time equivalent work experience.

The CPM qualification is now replaced by the New Zealand Diploma in Cardiac Physiological Measurement (Level 6), which is approved and accredited by NZQA and will be referred to as DipCPM.



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DipCPM Course Cost: \$1500 plus an annual SCT membership fee of \$150

Additional Skills: Spirometry testing may be performed within the cardiac physiology technician role. SCT offers a Spirometry Certification course which is available via online learning and requires a supervisor who is competent to perform the spirometry practical training and assessment. The cost for this course is \$250.

Advanced Scope of Practice: Qualified cardiac physiology technicians may progress to perform specific advanced practice skills, which are determined by SCT. Examples of such skills include: Exercise tolerance testing supervision or ambulatory ECG monitor analysis e.g. Holter monitor analysis. The technician is required to undertake the same training as is required for a cardiac physiologist performing the procedure.

Registration and APC Requirements

Cardiac Physiology Technicians are registered with the CPRB as a “Physiology Technician”, Scope of Practice: Cardiac and are required to hold an annual practicing certificate.

Alternative Names

Cardiac Physiology Technicians may also be employed as Cardiac Technicians or Physiology Technicians.

Note the SCT does not recognise the position title “ECG Technician” as they do not undertake SCT qualifications and are not eligible for registration or an APC.

Cardiac Physiologist

A cardiac physiologist typically performs the following roles:

- Ambulatory ECG monitor analysis and reporting (Holter/event)
- Cardiac catheterisation procedures: setup, monitoring, measurements, analysis and reporting of results during coronary angiograms, percutaneous coronary interventions (PCI), right heart studies, interventional procedures (e.g. TAVI, ASD closure)
- Pacemaker, implantable loop recorder (ILR) and implantable cardioverter defibrillator (ICD) implantation technical support: device selection and programming, patient setup and monitoring, lead testing and documentation.
- Pacemaker, ILR and ICD patient follow-up care: outpatient clinics, remote follow-up, inpatient support
- Electrophysiology studies and ablation - technical role
- Exercise tolerance testing – supervision role
- May also perform cardiac technician duties as required by the place of employment

Entry requirements: minimum of a BSc in physiology (preferred) or other relevant science major (e.g. exercise physiology). Applicants with other qualifications may be accepted but this is at the discretion of Otago University.

Employment Requirements: the trainee is required to be employed with a job title that reflects the technical nature of the role (e.g. trainee cardiac physiologist). The employing hospital must have current accreditation as a training hospital which is issued by SCT. Where a hospital does not meet the accreditation requirements, joint accreditation may be issued with a nearby larger centre to provide support for training. SCT issues accreditation for training of cardiac physiologists to hospitals that meet the staffing and procedure requirements.



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Qualifications:

The following Otago University qualifications are offered by distance learning (plus block weekends) and courses commence at the start of the university year.

Post Graduate Certificate in Medical Technology* – year 1

Post Graduate Diploma in Medical Technology – year 2

*This qualification may be obtained prior to employment as a trainee cardiac physiologist.

Certification of Cardiac Physiologists (CCP)

This two-year qualification is offered by SCT and is completed concurrently with the Otago University qualifications. CCP is delivered by online learning and includes the CPM (now DipCPM) qualification (see cardiac physiology technicians). The CCP course may be started at any time throughout the year and requires a clinical supervisor who is employed in a technical role, is a member of SCT and is competent to perform the practical training. CCP is awarded on completion of the CCP course requirements and attainment of 2 years full-time equivalent work experience.

The CCP qualification is currently being submitted for assessment and approval by NZQA as a Graduate Diploma in Clinical Cardiac Physiology (Level 7).

To qualify as a cardiac physiologist requires attainment of the Post Graduate Diploma in Medical Technology plus CCP.

CCP Course Cost: \$3000 plus an annual SCT membership fee of \$150

Qualified Physiologists

Cardiac Physiologists who specialise in Cardiac Implantable Electronic Device (CIED) follow-up or Electrophysiology procedures may undertake qualifications specific to these specialty areas.

CIED Follow-up

SCT offers the “CIED Certification” qualification which is a 2-year online course providing theoretical training and practical assessment for CIED patient follow-up. This course prepares the physiologist to sit the International Board of Heart Rhythm Examiners (IBHRE) exam.

The CIED Certification qualification is currently being submitted for assessment and approval by NZQA as a Masters in CIED (level 9).

Electrophysiology

The Cardiac Electrophysiology Institute of Australia (CEPIA) offers an online Graduate Diploma of Cardiac Electrophysiology.

Advertising

Advertisements aiming to recruit for trainee positions should direct applicants to the SCT website for information regarding the training courses.

Advertisements aimed at qualified and experienced international applicants should include advice that applicants should apply to SCT for membership via the SCT website.



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Section 2: International Cardiac Physiologist Applicants (overseas qualified)

Assessment of international applicants

Prior to interviewing the applicant, check the CPRB register: <https://cprb.org.nz/view-the-register/>

- If they are registered and their APC Status is: "Current" (i.e. there are no conditions), the applicant may be suitable for the role. Check whether they are registered as a technician or physiologist by selecting their name on the register.
- If they are not registered with the CPRB, advise the applicant to apply to SCT for membership. SCT will assess their qualifications and experience and if necessary, require them to take the CCP International (CCPI) exam. On passing the CCPI exam they will be awarded SCT membership which is required for registration. This process should be completed before interviewing.
- Prior to 2023 the international CCP exam was not available. If the applicant was registered prior to 2023 (as shown in the first 4 digits of their registration number) please contact SCT for advice.
- If the applicant is registered and their APC Status is: "Current - with conditions" (select their name to see the conditions i.e. under supervision). Advise the applicant to apply to SCT to sit the international CCP exam. If the applicant passes this exam, they are eligible for an APC without conditions.
- Based on past experience, SCT strongly advises that unregistered international applicants should not be employed prior to passing the CCPI exam.

Accepted by SCT

If SCT deem the applicant's qualification is equivalent to the SCT qualification standards, SCT will grant them Affiliate membership.

They should then apply to the CPRB for registration.

Please note: Affiliate membership is awarded to both cardiac technicians and cardiac physiologists. It is important to check with the CPRB register to ensure you are not employing a cardiac technician into a cardiac physiologist position.

Not Accepted by SCT

If SCT deem that the applicant has appropriate professional qualifications and employment history but these cannot be fully assessed, the applicant is informed that they must sit the international certification exam prior to gaining SCT membership.

If they pass this exam, they are awarded Affiliate membership with SCT and should then apply to the CPRB for registration.

Declined by SCT

If SCT deem the applicant does not have qualifications equivalent to the SCT qualification standards, the applicant is declined SCT membership. Meaning they cannot be employed in NZ as a cardiac physiology technician or cardiac physiologist.