



# Tertiary Employment Pathway

A guide for paramedicine students and graduates in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia wishing to join Hato Hone St John New Zealand



**Hato Hone  
St John**

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## Tertiary Employment Pathway (TEP) Guide

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## Nau mai, haere mai – Welcome!

Tēnā koutou and congratulations on reaching this exciting stage in your paramedicine journey. Whether you are nearing the end of your studies or have recently graduated, the Tertiary Employment Pathway (TEP) is your gateway to a meaningful career with **Hato Hone St John**.

This guide takes you through the full employment journey, explaining what to expect, how the process works, and how you can best prepare, so you can confidently step into a rewarding role that makes a real difference.

## About Hato Hone St John

Hato Hone St John is Aotearoa New Zealand's largest ambulance provider, delivering emergency and non-emergency care to around 90% of the population. Every year, our teams respond to over 500,000 incidents across urban centres and remote rural communities.

Our history dates back to 1885, and our mission remains constant – to enhance the health and well-being of all New Zealanders. Our unique service model places **Emergency Medical Technicians** (EMTs) and **Emergency Medical Assistants** (EMAs) alongside **Paramedics**, supported by volunteers, Critical Care Paramedics, and Extended Care Paramedics. Many new graduates begin their journey as EMTs before progressing to Paramedic roles – and beyond.

In 2022, we adopted the name Hato Hone St John to reflect our deepening relationship with Māori and our commitment to bicultural practice. "Hato Hone" is the Te Reo Māori translation of St John.



## What is the Tertiary Employment Pathway?

The Tertiary Employment Pathway is a national recruitment programme that supports tertiary students and recent graduates into full-time ambulance roles with Hato Hone St John, including students and graduates currently working as volunteers or casual employees.

Through the Tertiary Employment Pathway, you may be considered for either an Emergency Medical Technician role or a Graduate Paramedic position. Most people begin their career with us as an Emergency Medical Technician

### How the pathway works

The Tertiary Employment Pathway provides a clear and supported starting point for your ambulance career. Encompassing recruitment, onboarding and transition to independent practice. Most successful applicants begin as Emergency Medical Technicians, gaining valuable on-road experience before applying for the Graduate Paramedic Programme (GPP) when opportunities become available.

Graduate Paramedic positions are limited and are prioritised for existing permanent staff. This means starting as an Emergency Medical Technician is not a fallback, it's the standard pathway into Paramedic practice with Hato Hone St John.

### Emergency Medical Technician

The Emergency Medical Technician role is the main entry point through the Tertiary Employment Pathway and is a key part of frontline care. It suits students, diploma graduates, and degree-qualified applicants who want to build practical, on-road experience.

In this role, you'll develop your clinical skills, work as part of an ambulance crew, and build a strong foundation for your career.

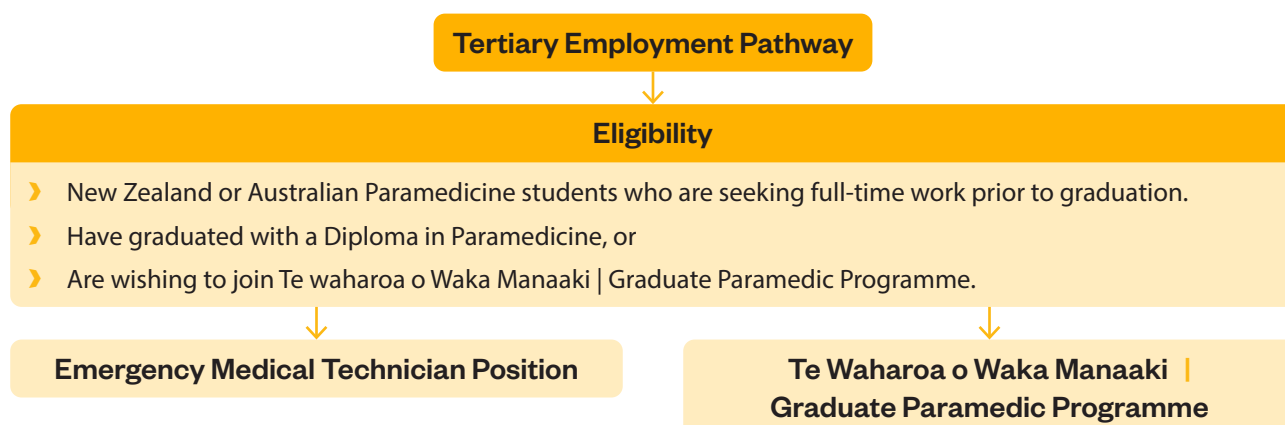
### Te Waharoa o Waka Manaaki | Graduate Paramedic Programme

The Graduate Paramedic Programme supports your transition to independent Paramedic practice. To be considered, you'll need a Bachelor of Health Science (Paramedicine) qualification from an approved New Zealand or Australian provider and be registered, or eligible for registration, with Te Kaunihera Manapou | Paramedic Council.

Positions are limited and typically filled internally first. Many graduates join as Emergency Medical Technicians first, applying for the internally advertised Graduate Paramedic Programme.

### What this means for you

Starting as an Emergency Medical Technician is the most common pathway and a strong foundation for your career. It gives you the experience and confidence needed to step into the Graduate Paramedic Programme when the time is right.







## Get ready

Before applying, take some time to:

- › Review the eligibility criteria for Emergency Medical Technician and Graduate Paramedic roles.
- › Review our medical standards (accessible through our careers website) to ensure you meet them.
- › Reflect on your clinical experiences and goals.
- › Prepare a professional CV and cover letter.
- › Consider your preferred work locations and flexibility.
- › Ensure your documentation is up to date (transcript, driver's licence, etc).

Professional recognition pathways between Australia and New Zealand support trans-Tasman mobility. If you studied in Australia, ensure you meet registration requirements for **Te Kaunihera Manapou | Paramedic Council** to practise in NZ, should you wish to join through the Graduate Paramedic role.

When considering applicants, we are looking for people who are:

- › Compassionate and community-focused.
- › Clinically capable and willing to keep learning.
- › Strong communicators and team players.
- › Culturally competent and aware of the importance of equity in healthcare.
- › Adaptable and calm under pressure.

## Talent communities

We do not advertise all the time, but we have created talent communities – a place for you to express interest in a specific career pathway. By joining, you will be the first to hear about suitable roles, receive updates on our workforce needs, and stay connected with us through direct communication.

You can sign up to join these here:

- › [New Zealand Tertiary Employment Pathway Talent Community](#)
- › [Australian Tertiary Employment Pathway Talent Community](#)

## The recruitment journey

Here is what to expect when applying through the Tertiary Employment Pathway:



### 1. Application

Submit your CV, cover letter, academic transcript, and location preferences. The job advert will clearly state whether Emergency Medical Technician or Graduate Paramedic roles are being offered and whether the campaign is local or national.



### 2. Screening and values assessment

You will be assessed against role eligibility and alignment with our five values. A short scenario-based tool helps us learn more about how you work with others.



### 3. Interview and assessment

You may be invited to either an online interview or an in-person assessment centre. During this stage, you will be asked to reflect on your past experiences, demonstrate cultural competence, and share your motivations for pursuing this career.

You're welcome to prepare some notes ahead of time – being well-prepared will help you feel more confident and perform at your best. You are also encouraged to ask us questions – we want to make sure it is the right fit for you too.

**Tip:** We strongly recommend using the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to structure your responses. Make sure you are familiar with key concepts such as health equity and cultural safety, as these may be explored in the conversation.



### 4. Clinical and psychometric assessment

You may be required to undertake a face-to-face clinical assessment aligned with the Emergency Medical Technician scope of practice.

**New Zealand applicants** will complete this clinical assessment during the recruitment process. While it is a required step, it does not automatically grant Emergency Medical Technician Authority to Practise. Instead, it helps assess clinical readiness and is just one of several factors considered. This stage may include a skills assessment and a clinical interview. If you progress to this step, we will provide more detailed information at the time.

**Australian applicants** will complete their clinical assessment after starting employment. This will be a condition of continuing in the role with Hato Hone St John.

**Please note:** Emergency Medical Technician ATP is only granted to candidates who are formally offered a role through the Tertiary Employment Pathway, and who go on to complete onboarding requirements – including the induction course, workbooks, clinical skills sheet, and manager endorsement. For internal volunteers and casuals, you may be able to gain EMT ATP following successful completion of the Clinical Assessment. This is managed by our Clinical ATP Manager.

A short psychometric assessment will also be completed to help us better understand how you think and how you respond under pressure.





## 5. Reference and health checks

We will ask for referees, a health declaration, your licence details, and you'll complete a police check alongside a working with children assessment. You must meet our medical standards and be fit to work in an ambulance setting.

**Note:** For local applicants, a fitness assessment is likely to occur in person during the recruitment process; for those applying from Australia, remaining employed is conditional on passing a fitness assessment and this will occur during your first few days of employment.



## 6. Offer

If successful, you will receive a formal job offer confirming your employment stream (Emergency Medical Technician position or Graduate Paramedic Programme), your start date, and your work location. We will also outline your onboarding requirements and next steps.

Unsuccessful applicants are welcome to request feedback and reapply for future intakes. External applicants can apply within two years of graduation, while internal EMTs can apply at any time for future GPP opportunities.

## What happens next?

If you are new to Hato Hone St John, your start date will be three working days before the Foundation Programme begins. This gives you time to complete online learning and connect with your local team.

All external applicants will receive a welcome pack and be loaded into our onboarding system (Enboarder), which will guide you through your induction journey.

Internal staff (such as current volunteers or casuals transitioning into full-time roles) will have a tailored onboarding journey based on what you have already completed. For those progressing from full-time Emergency Medical Technician to the Graduate Paramedic Programme, onboarding will focus on your shift into Paramedic practice rather than the basics.

## Foundation programme

This two-week programme is compulsory for all new-to-Hato Hone St John staff who have not previously completed it. It covers:

- › Operational Induction course.
- › Driving course and Ambulance Operations Risk Management Course.
- › Operational familiarisation.
- › Clinical orientation, procedures, and equipment.

Courses are held nationwide, and you'll be advised of the location before your start date. If travel is required from your hired location, this will be organised by Hato Hone St John.

## Local onboarding and mentoring

Once the Foundation Programme is complete (or if not required), you will begin local onboarding in your assigned district. You will be paired with a mentor and work at least three "three-up" blocks to build confidence. For some, this will be longer and for others, this may not be required at all.



Local onboarding helps familiarise you with your environment, team, equipment, and local protocols. New staff must complete:

- › A driving logbook (if required).
- › A clinical induction checklist.
- › Workbooks from the Foundation Programme.

When these are complete and endorsed, you will be issued your Emergency Medical Technician ATP and may work independently at the Emergency Medical Technician level.

Expectations for new starters:

- › Complete online pre-learning at least 48 hours before the Foundation Programme.
- › Submit completed workbooks within 35 days.
- › Undertake a minimum of three 3-up blocks of mentoring.
- › Provide evidence of a full NZ driver's licence within 3 months

## Next steps

Once your local onboarding is complete and your Emergency Medical Technician Authority to Practise (ATP) is confirmed, you'll be able to practise independently on road.

If you've been employed as an Emergency Medical Technician, this completes the first stage of your TEP journey. From here, many people continue to build experience in the EMT role before progressing toward Paramedic practice.

The main pathway into the Graduate Paramedic Programme is through internal recruitment. Districts regularly run Expression of Interest (EOI) processes for GPP intakes, which are prioritised for permanent employees within the district. Because of this, most candidates begin as EMTs and apply for the GPP once they are established in the organisation.

Many of our people also complete their Bachelor of Health Science (Paramedicine) while working, often through distance or part-time study. This is a well-supported pathway, and development opportunities are prioritised for our existing workforce.

If you've been employed directly into the Graduate Paramedic Programme, you'll now begin this next stage of your development. To support your transition into practice, it's important to:

- › Ensure your Paramedic Council registration and APC remain current
- › Stay connected with your mentor and district leadership team
- › Continue engaging with the Clinical Practice Guidelines (CPGs)
- › Prepare for structured learning and supported progression to independent practice.

More information about Te Waharoa o Waka Manaaki | Graduate Paramedic Programme can be found in the appendix.

## Life on the road

Working in an ambulance is rewarding and unpredictable. You will face moments of challenge and growth, but also purpose, teamwork, and pride. Your shifts will vary across days, nights, and weekends. You may begin in a relief cluster covering several stations or be based at one site.

Our teams thrive when they support one another. Do not be afraid to ask questions, offer help, and bring your full self to the job.



## Final thoughts

The Tertiary Employment Pathway exists to help you succeed. Whether you are stepping in as an Emergency Medical Technician or Graduate Paramedic, you are starting a career with purpose. Every scene you attend, every patient you care for, and every decision you make will contribute to the well-being of our communities.

We hope to see you soon. If you have any questions, please reach out to [paragrade@stjohn.org.nz](mailto:paragrade@stjohn.org.nz).

**Ngā mihi nui – thank you, and best of luck on your journey!**



## Appendix

### TEP timeframe (indicative)

| Stage                                          | Timeframe                                                                       | Notes                                                                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Application opens</b>                       | Open for at least two weeks                                                     | Advertised nationally or locally, ideally in line with semester dates                                    |
| <b>Shortlisting and interviews</b>             | 2–4 weeks after closing date                                                    | Includes values screening, interviews, and clinical assessments (NZ)                                     |
| <b>Job offers sent</b>                         | Dependent on pre-employment checks                                              | Role confirmed (Emergency Medical Technician or GPP)                                                     |
| <b>Pre-start onboarding</b>                    | 1 week before the Foundation Programme                                          | Online learning and local introductions                                                                  |
| <b>Foundation programme</b>                    | 2 weeks                                                                         | Includes cultural welcome, driving, clinical systems                                                     |
| <b>Local onboarding and mentoring</b>          | 3–6 weeks (min. 3 three-up blocks)                                              | Orientation to local district and practice at Emergency Medical Technician level                         |
| <b>Next steps</b>                              | N/A                                                                             | For those hired as EMTs, the programme is complete. For GPP employees, moving into the orientation phase |
| <b>GPP orientation phase</b>                   | Minimum 3 months<br>This can be 1 year +, depending on operational availability | Focus on CPGs, working alongside Paramedics, reflection and learning                                     |
| <b>Precepting phase</b>                        | ~3 months (32 shifts, max 6 months)                                             | Supervised practice, case studies, clinical support day                                                  |
| <b>Paramedic Clinical Assessment Day (CAD)</b> | Scheduled after precepting                                                      | Final clinical evaluation                                                                                |
| <b>Paramedic ATP awarded</b>                   | Immediately after successful CAD                                                | Transition to full Paramedic role and roster                                                             |

## Clinical roles

### First Responder

Ambulance officers practising at this level have undergone a comprehensive first aid course, as well as a specialist module specific to their environment (ambulance, events, or communications).

First responders have no ATP so cannot administer medicines independently.

### Emergency Medical Technician

This base ambulance qualification is the first level to be issued an ATP. These officers have successfully completed the National Diploma in Ambulance. This course takes 6–12 months to complete and includes core skills, as well as the theory and application of key concepts relating to both medical and traumatic events.

### Graduate Paramedic

Graduate Paramedics have the same scope of practice as Emergency Medical Technicians but are recognisable as being on the graduate pathway and transitioning to independent paramedic practice. Graduate Paramedics will ideally be working with Paramedics throughout but depending on operational availability, may work alongside EMTs and fellow Graduates.

### Paramedic

Paramedics are capable of delivering some medicines specific to patients requiring pain relief, in shock, or who are continuously fitting. Officers at this level have either completed an internal education package or have completed a Bachelor of Health Science in Paramedicine.

### Critical Care and Intensive Care Paramedics

Officers at this level are specialists in critical care and clinical judgement, with a proven ability to manage complex patients. They can deliver a wide range of medicines, advanced airway management, and several invasive skills. A minimum of a Postgraduate diploma is required to achieve this level at present.

### Extended Care Paramedics

Extended Care Paramedics (ECPs) support patients with urgent, unscheduled primary healthcare needs. An ECP specialises in assessing patients with low acuity conditions and providing treatment for common minor illnesses and injuries at home, referring to the patient's GP wherever appropriate. These clinicians have completed a minimum of a Postgraduate diploma.



## Graduate Paramedic Programme (GPP)

### Orientation phase

The orientation phase is designed to support you in becoming more competent as an independent ambulance officer and ensure you are competent with our Clinical Practice Guidelines, scope of practice and working environment. It is the first phase in the Graduate Paramedic Programme, and timeframes will vary depending on competence and preceptor availability.

**Note:** If you are employed into our Graduate Paramedic Programme, you will receive additional information and material closer to the time. This document simply provides a snapshot of the programme.

- › **Minimum duration:** Three months (for new to HHStJ or volunteers).
- › **Others:** May vary at the manager's discretion.

**Note:** In some Districts, such as Auckland, staff may remain in orientation longer due to preceptor availability; over 18 months is common.

During this phase, staff should:

- › Engage with clinical discussions, CPG study, and learning on MySitrep – our internal education portal.
- › There are no mandatory components, but proactive learning is expected.

### Precepting phase

Our Preceptors are experienced Paramedics who have undergone additional training to better support those in the Graduate Paramedic Programme as Graduate Paramedic's transition to independent Paramedic practice. The precepting phase begins once operational availability allows and you are deemed ready to move forward to this stage.

The precepting phase:

- › **Duration:** 32 shifts
- › **Includes:** Case studies and Clinical Support day
- › **Supported by:** Assigned preceptor and preceptor reports.

### Paramedic Clinical Assessment Day

A Paramedic Clinical Assessment Day is typically scheduled in alignment with the end of precepting. On successful completion of the Clinical Assessment Day, Paramedic Authority to Practise is awarded.

### Programme completion

Once the programme is completed:

- › Staff receive Paramedic epaulettes.
- › Paramedic ATP is awarded.
- › Eligible to practise independently.



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