July 2026

Recertification Programme Survey Report

Executive summary

Prepared for the **Dental Council New Zealand**

At **Large.**

About this research

5,677

practitioners invited

1,331

responded, a 23% response rate

71%

of respondents completed the survey

Purpose

- Informs the 2026/27 review of the recertification programme
- Measures understanding, perceptions of effectiveness, barriers to completion, and appetite for further structure
- Compares against the 2024 survey wherever the questions allow

Method

- Online survey of registered oral health practitioners
- The 2024 wave drew around 1,260 responses on comparable questions
- Bases vary by question and are stated on every slide; unweighted throughout

Reporting notes

- Percentages are rounded, so totals may not sum to 100
- Rating scales differ by wave (1–5 in 2024, 0–5 in 2026), so raw averages cannot be compared directly
- Trends use POMP (Percentage Of Maximum Possible: each answer is rescaled to 0–100, showing the average position on the scale

Key findings

1. Confidence that the recertification programme maintains competence is the lowest-rated measure, and has fallen since 2024.

2. Dentists rate the programme lower than every other profession, and the gap has widened on most measures since 2024.

3. Clarity of Council's guidance on the role of a peer has fallen since 2024, and the peer relationship is a recurring theme in practitioner feedback.

4. Written reflection and the development plan are rated the least useful components, and are also the two most common barriers to completing the programme.

5. Practitioners express a broad desire for more prescription in the programme, most commonly a return to a points or hours based CPD system.

How this compares with 2024

2024 theme	In 2024	In 2026	Since 2024
Lack of clarity	Understanding scored 77 out of 100; clarity was a top-three reason practitioners doubted the programme.	Understanding is now 72 and clarity of the peer role 56 out of 100; unclear expectations remain a common free-text theme.	Persists
Time-consuming	A top-three theme: a self-directed system, heavy on paperwork.	Written reflection (33%) and the development plan (37%) are the least useful components and the two most common barriers.	Persists
Lack of verification	Practitioners felt the programme lacked accountability.	Reinstating the previous points or hours system is the most common open-text request (37% of final comments).	Persists
Compulsory areas of practice	65% preferred further standardisation, but from a small routed subgroup.	60% would benefit from more standardisation and 27% back compulsory areas of learning.	Unclear

How the six professions differ

POMP score (0–100) on the five perception measures. Higher (green) is more positive.

Dentists rate lowest on **23 of the 27 rating questions**; dental therapists highest on **17**.

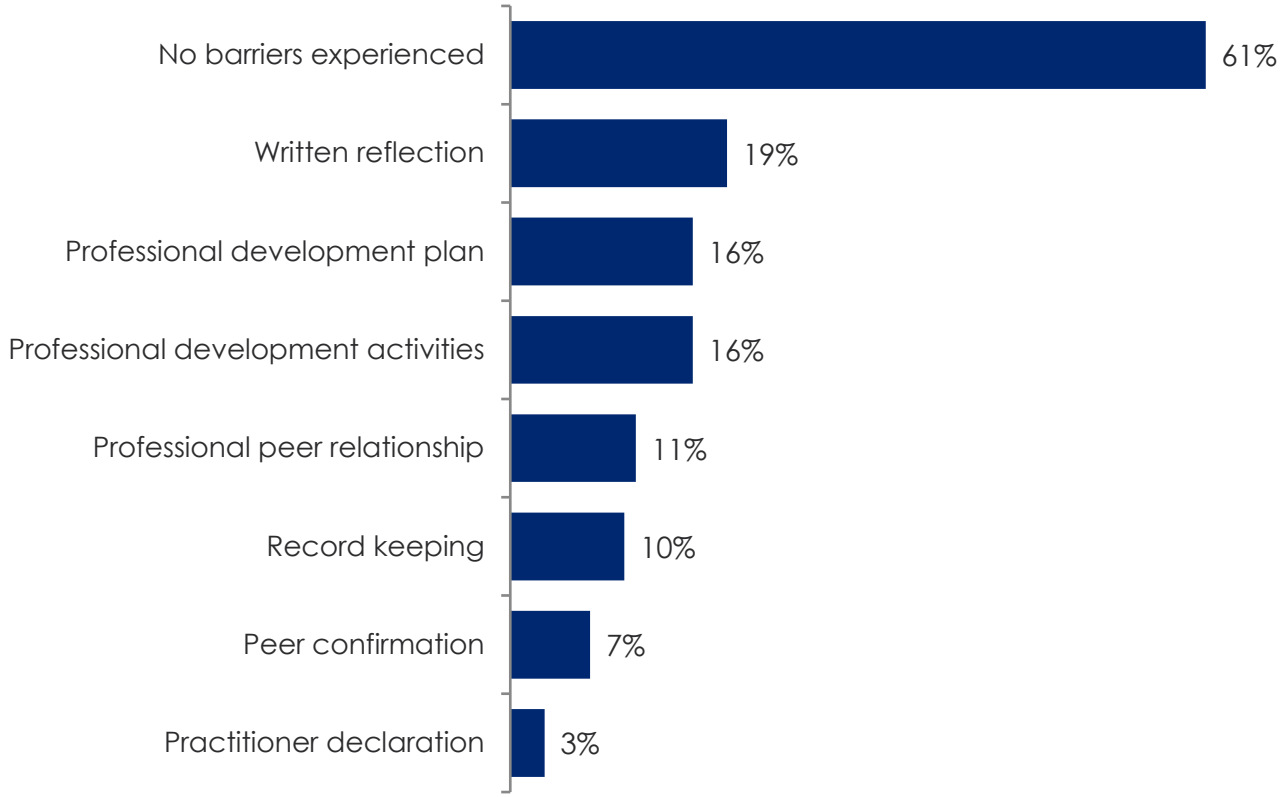
	Dentist / dental specialist (n=821)	Oral health therapist (n=232)	Dental hygienist (n=116)	Dental therapist (n=88)	Clinical dental technician (n=57)	Dental technician (n=17)
Understanding	69	76	75	78	83	N/A
Supports competence	45	58	55	63	63	N/A
Peer usefulness	59	65	64	76	74	N/A
Peer-role guidance	51	63	60	70	75	N/A
Comfort raising concerns	47	58	58	64	63	N/A

Dentists (n=821) are measured precisely. The Dental Technician group has only 17 responses, too few to report, so its cells are shown as N/A. Two of the 27 questions, the usefulness of professional development activities and of support from professional associations, show no clear difference between professions.

Barriers to completing the programme

Have you experienced barriers completing any parts of the recertification programme? (%)

Those answering (n=972). Multiple responses permitted.



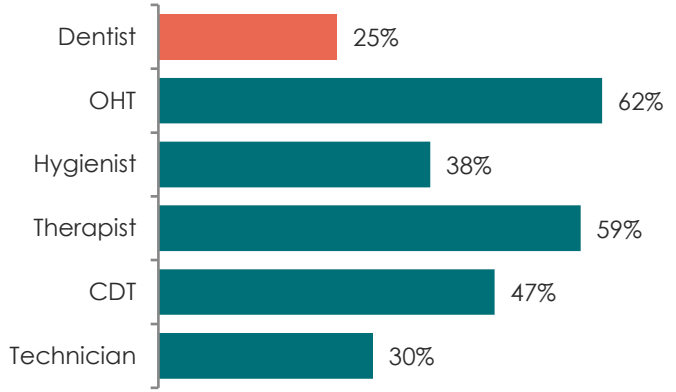
- Most practitioners complete the programme without difficulty: 61% report no barriers at all. Where barriers do arise, they are concentrated in a few components: written reflection (19%), the development plan (16%) and development activities (16%).

What would help practitioners meet the requirements

Which, if any, of the following would help you meet the recertification requirements? (%)

Those answering (n=921). Multiple responses permitted.

Want suggested learning topics, by profession



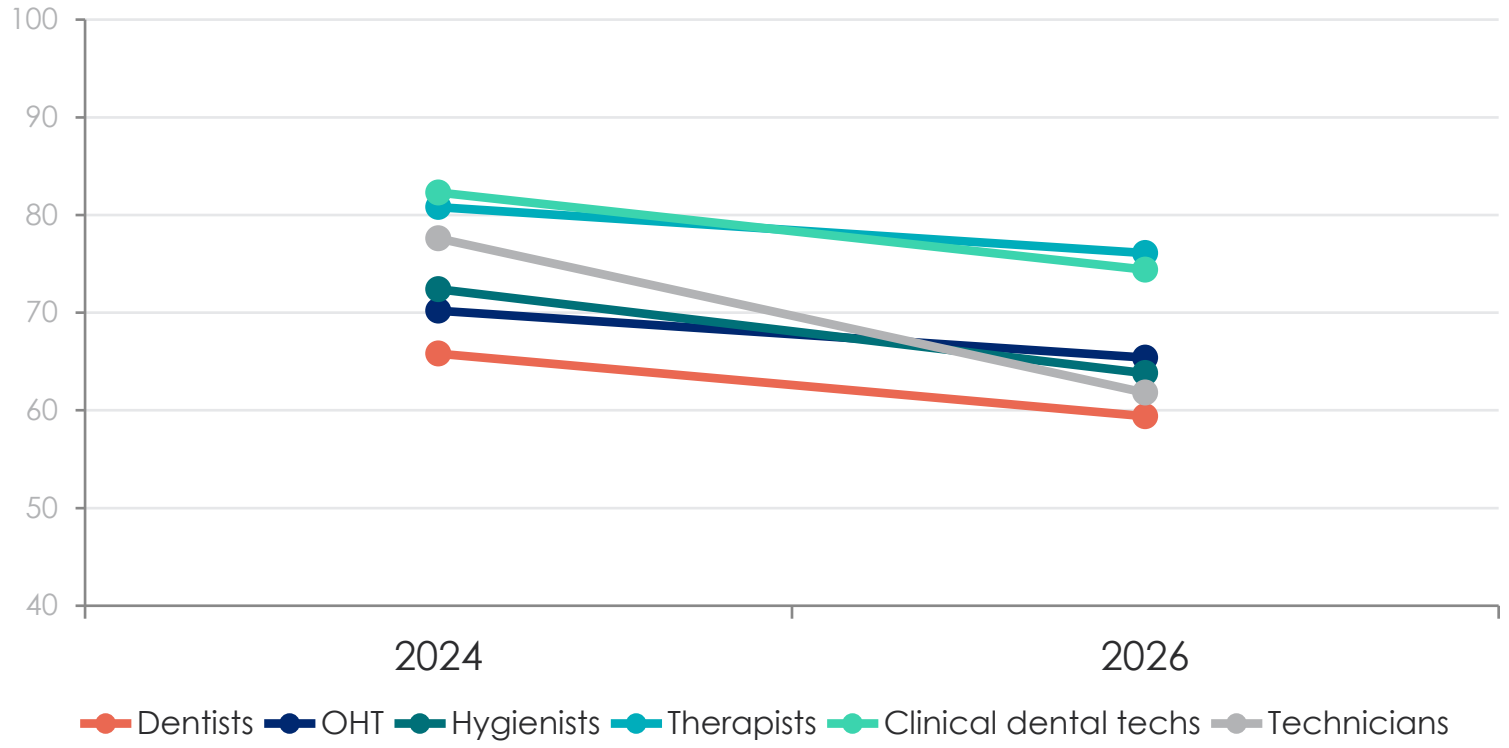
- An online recording system is the most selected option (38%).
- Suggested learning topics (35%) and standard reflection prompts (30%) follow. The auxiliary and therapist professions request them more often than dentists (25%).

Usefulness of the peer relationship

How useful do you find your peer relationship or peer group for maintaining competence? (%)

Those answering (n=948). Scale 0–5, where 0 = not useful at all and 5 = very useful.

Usefulness of the peer relationship: POMP score, 2024 to 2026



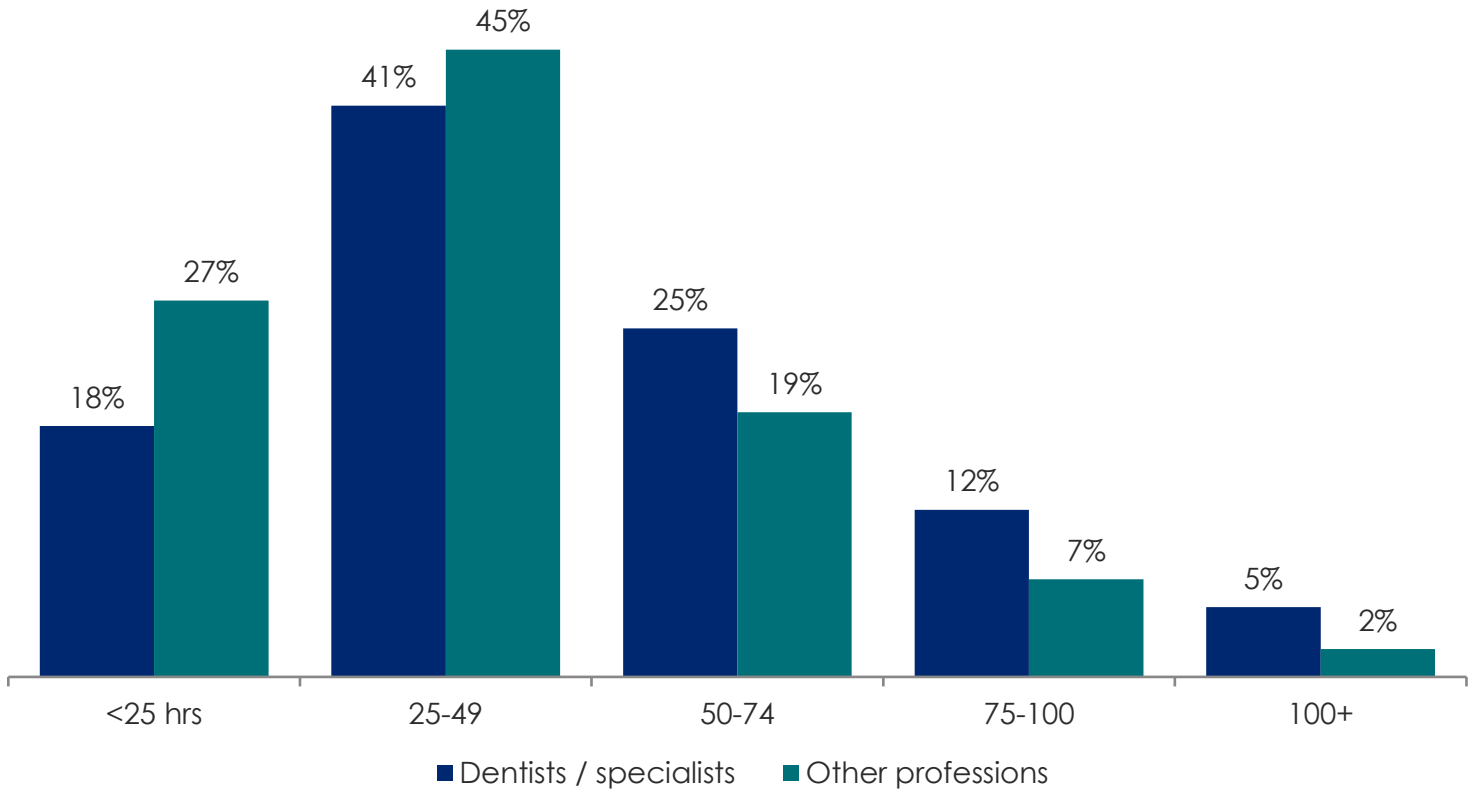
- Usefulness of the peer relationship fell from 70 to 63 out of 100, and the decline is similar across professions.
- Peer problems are the third most common free-text theme (22%): finding a peer, peers retiring, and confirmation delays.

POMP score (0–100) for each profession, 2024 and 2026. Higher is more positive.

Time spent meeting the requirements

How many hours do you spend per year meeting your recertification requirements? (%)

Those answering (n=1,017)



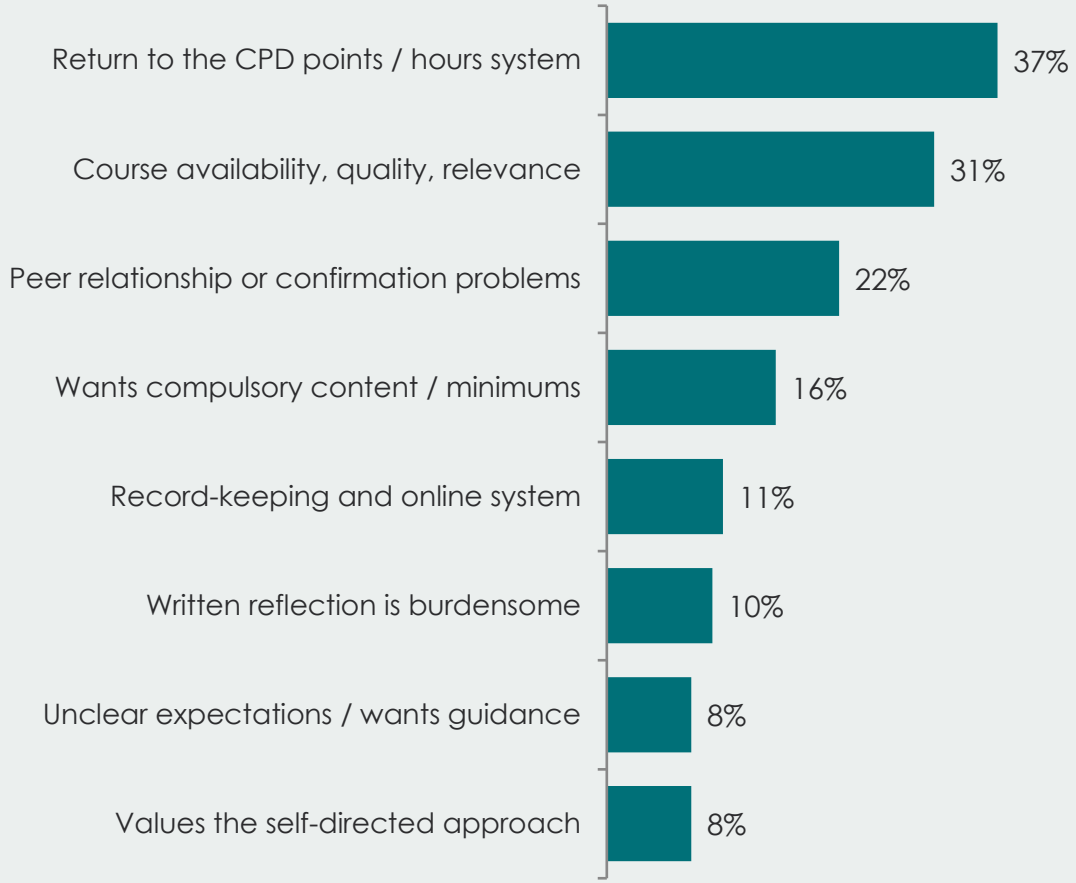
- Dentists and specialists spend more time than the other professions: 17% report 75 hours or more, against 9% of the others.
- New question in 2026, so there is no 2024 baseline for comparison.

Suggestions for the 2026/27 review

In their own words

Is there anything else Council could consider as part of the 2026/27 review of the recertification programme? (% coded)

Those answering, coded (n=381). The call to reinstate the previous points or hours system does not differ reliably by profession (dentists 39% of their comments, other professions 31%).



Representative comments, by theme

Return to points/hours

"The recertification programme is vague and lacks proper guidelines. While the previous system was less flexible there was strict criteria for continuing education which this one lacks."

Course availability

"I prefer the previous recertification process, which included CPD numbers and required us to attend lectures/read articles, etc. and update our knowledge to align with contemporary practice."

Peer relationship

"A requirement for more peer involvement outside of the single peer relationship, a degree of CPD type collective interaction as there is an opportunity for professional isolation currently."

Compulsory minimums

"I feel the current system has merit however so did the previous compulsory hours one, a better combination would be more ideal"

Recording system

"Online recording and portal to make it easier to structure. When its scheduled, rather than everyone have their own word documents in various formats and stored wherever."