

# New Zealand National Bird Banding Scheme (NZNBBS)

## Certification Application Process Guidance Document

### Level 1: Trainee

All Activities under direct L3 supervision

Log all activities in Training Log, signed by L3

### Level 2: Competent

May work independently under general L3 supervision

Log all activities in Training Log, signed by L3, learn how to complete banding schedules

### Level 3: Expert/Trainer

Extensive experience.

Train and supervise L1 & L2, sign Training Logs, order bands, submit banding schedules, oversee projects, ensure that relevant permits are in place.

## Application Checklist

<i>Complete this checklist before submitting application paperwork</i>	Yes	N/A
<b>Level 1 banding certification application</b>		
<a href="#">NZNBBS Certification Application Form Level 1</a>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Level 2 or 3 banding certification application</b>		
<a href="#">NZNBBS Part A: Certification Application Form Level 2/3</a>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<a href="#">NZNBBS Part B: Bander Training Log</a>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<a href="#">NZNBBS Part C: Bander Endorsement Form</a> x 2 (at least)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
Description of procedure for closing large ( $\geq 10$ mm internal diameter) stainless steel bands (any format) – <i>if applying for species groups that use these band types</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<a href="#">NZNBBS Appendix 1: Mist-netting Endorsement Form</a>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<a href="#">NZNBBS Appendix 2: Pullus (nestling) Endorsement Form</a>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<a href="#">NZNBBS Appendix 3: Transponder Insertion Endorsement Form</a>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<a href="#">NZNBBS Appendix 4: Training Progress of Level 1 Trainee Bander Form</a> *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<a href="#">NZNBBS Appendix 5: Banding Trainer Appraisal Form</a> *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

\*These forms are not compulsory to submit for applications, but it is strongly advised that trainees and trainers review these forms at least once a year.

## Context

DOC is responsible for the management of marking systems on wildlife, including banding. The banding certification system of the New Zealand National Bird Banding Scheme (NZNBBS) ensures that banders are competent for various species and capture methods.

All banders (including trainees) need to be registered with the NZNBBS. Certification levels for different species groups and capture methods are granted based on evidence of competency. However, certification does not give you permission to capture, handle or mark birds. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are working under a valid [Wildlife Act Authorisation \(permit\)](#) (view the [Competency vs Permission Decision](#)

[Tool](#)), managed by DOC's Permissions Team. If you are a researcher, you will also need to ensure that you have an Animal Ethics permit to capture, handle and mark your study bird(s)

Please ensure that you familiarise yourself with the **Bird Bander's Manual** produced by the New Zealand National Bird Banding Scheme, as it describes the legal framework as well as the standards and details of "best practice" that are to be followed by every bander in NZ. For transponder insertion, please ensure that you work according to the relevant Best Practice manual for the species.

You can order the Banding Manual, banding pliers, note-books, wing rules, calipers, Pesola scales, etc. from the Banding Office. Please download the [Price list](#) and [Order form](#) from <http://www.doc.govt.nz/our-work/bird-banding/>. Please note that you need Level 3 certification to order bands and mist-nets.

## Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance for anybody wishing to apply for NZNBBS certification; both those applying for the first time, and those who would like to request an upgrade of their current certification.

## What you need

Please visit <https://www.doc.govt.nz/our-work/bird-banding/how-to-become-a-certified-bander/> to download any forms required for your application. All applications should be submitted to [bandingoffice@doc.govt.nz](mailto:bandingoffice@doc.govt.nz).

### Level 1 applications

In order to become listed as a Level 1 (trainee) bander you must submit:

- [NZNBBS Certification Application Form Level 1](#) including
  - Your name, postal address, phone number, email address
  - An outline of your need for bird banding certification
  - A summary of your bird banding AND handling experience to date (if any)

You may also submit the following documentation (*optional*) for us to record on your file:

- [NZNBBS Part B: Bander Training Log](#) of any bird banding/handling experience you have to date
- Endorsements from your bird banding/handling trainers

### Level 2 applications

In order to submit your application for Level 2 banding certification to the Banding Advisory Committee, *all* applicants must include the following documentation:

- [NZNBBS Part A: Certification Application Form Level 2/3](#) including
  - Your name, postal address, phone number, email address (even if you're already a registered bander please include this so that we can check we have up to date information for you) (**Table A1**)
  - An outline of your need for bird banding certification (**Table A2**)
  - A summary of all your bird banding AND handling experience to date (please include experience with all species groups – not just the one/s you are applying for) (**Table A3\***)
  - A summary of your experience with different band types and sizes (**Table A4\***)
- A record (or summary) of your banding experience in any convenient format, signed off by your Level 3 (or equivalent) trainer – [NZNBBS Part B: Bander Training Log\\*](#) can be used, or another format.

- At least 2x [NZNBBS Part C: Bander Endorsement Form](#) from your Level 3 trainers outlining your competency in bird capture, handling and banding. Endorsement forms may be sent directly by your endorser to [bandingoffice@doc.govt.nz](mailto:bandingoffice@doc.govt.nz). If you are applying for certification for multiple species groups, please submit at least one endorsement form that covers each species group.
- *If applying for certification in species groups that use large ( $\geq 10\text{mm}$  internal diameter) stainless steel bands:* A description (in any format) of the proper procedure for closing these bands.

*\*Please ensure your information is consistent across Table A3, Table A4 and Part B: Bander Training Log.*

You may also wish to apply for additional endorsements to your certification. In this case, please also include the following relevant documentation:

- [NZNBBS Appendix 1: Mist-netting Endorsement Form](#), filled out and signed by you and your trainer(s)
- [NZNBBS Appendix 2: Pullus \(nestling\) Endorsement Form](#), filled out and signed by you and your trainer(s)
- [NZNBBS Appendix 3: Transponder Insertion Endorsement Form](#), filled out and signed by you and your trainer(s)

### Level 3 applications

In order to submit your application for Level 3 banding certification to the Banding Advisory Committee, *all* applicants must include the documentation outlined for Level 2 applications above.

In addition, we require evidence of your competency in bander training and data management (this can be outlined in [NZNBBS Part C: Bander Endorsement Form](#) or evidenced in previous submission of schedules to the Banding Office).

*Please note: If you are applying for a range of certification levels across species groups, including Level 1 for some species groups, follow the application process for Level 2 & 3 applications, requesting Level 1 for the desired species groups in table A3 in the application form.*

## Assessment of certification applications

Applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis by the Banding Advisory Committee (BAC). It's role is to deliberate each certification application and advise the National Banding Office on a banding certification level to be awarded to applicants.

The BAC is made up of expert representatives of the banding community, including species experts within DOC, as well as external stakeholders such as universities, museums, Fish & Game, Crown Research Institutes and Birds NZ.

Applicants are assessed based on evidence of competency they provide in the following areas:

- Breadth of experience
- Challenges of working with a particular group
- Competency as reported by the Level 3 banders that supervised their banding activities

*Please note: There is no threshold number of birds that you must have banded to be eligible for certification upgrade. This is because certification should be granted based on evidence of competency, not number of birds banded. Instead you must display experience and competency with a range of species, band types (stainless steel vs. incoloy) and band sizes for your application to be submitted to the BAC. If you would like some guidance please ask your Level 3 trainer(s) for feedback on whether your experience level would be*

considered appropriate for a certification upgrade. You can also email the Banding Office at [bandingoffice@doc.govt.nz](mailto:bandingoffice@doc.govt.nz) for advice.

## Processing times

The processing times provided here are a guide. If for any reason the processing times fall outside of these guides, we will email you and inform you of the delay.

### Level 1 applications

The turnaround time for processing Level 1 applications is 10 business days, given that all required information stated in the 'What you need' section above is included on application form.

### Level 2 & 3 applications

To facilitate faster processing please read this document and complete the checklist above before submitting your application. This will ensure that you are able to provide all required documentation and reduce the number of times we have to get back to you and ask you to submit more information.

Once all required documentation has been collated, your application will be compiled and submitted to the Banding Advisory Committee (BAC). This decision regarding your application should occur within 20 business days of submission of your application to the BAC.

*Note: Please allow plenty of time for your application to be processed and finalised. The Banding Office deals with many applications and while every effort is made to process applications efficiently and in a timely manner, we cannot guarantee that your application will be finalised by any specific date that you are working towards. A requirement to get certified quickly in order to take part in a project will not be considered sufficient reason to grant certification.*

## Information for applicants with overseas experience

Endorsements from overseas trainers may be provided if applicant has no NZ experience. Depending on level\* of overseas experience, the BAC may request some time spent banding with local L3 to become familiar with NZ native species before granting L2/3 certification.

\*Level of experience is judged on range of experience with 'difficult' species and situations, and range of band sizes/types used.

## Information for Captive/Rehab applicants

The specific Captive/Rehab certification category differs from certification for wild bird banding as follows:

- Generally working in-doors (or having ready access to a warm and dry and well-lit environment for banding)
- Capture and handling techniques – often with the assistance of others, capturing birds from a confined space (cage, aviary)
- Only capturing one bird at a time (as opposed to a flock flying into mist-nets)
- The option to choose at which point to capture a bird for banding (time of day or season, weather conditions, condition of bird, or when the bird is being handled for treatment anyway)

- The opportunity to observe the bird after banding and monitor/adjust or remove bands if required
- Less emphasis on moult scoring and aging techniques
- Generally those working with captive birds only would have lower numbers of birds banded, but extensive handling experience
- The proficiency required in applying a band is the same regardless of whether the bird is captive or wild

Any bander who already holds L2/L3 for a wild bird species group can automatically be allocated the same level captive/rehab for that species group. Alternatively, those working exclusively with captive/rehab birds (and so do not have any wild bird experience) can gain captive/rehab L2\*/L3\* restricted to the species groups they have appropriate experience with. The level of banding experience required to obtain captive/rehab certification generally differs slightly from the wild categories, but applicants do need provide evidence of extensive handling experience and proof of proper band closure technique – this can be through endorsement letters from trainers or by completing a ‘dry-run’ of closing bands and posting them back to us so that band closure can be assessed.

## Contact

For further details on the certification system and application process, contact:

Email: [bandingoffice@doc.govt.nz](mailto:bandingoffice@doc.govt.nz)

Address: National Banding Office

PO Box 108, Wellington 6140