

End of Year 2026 Applicant Timeline	
Pre-application Preparation	
May to August	ACE Nursing Student Presentations
Tuesday 21 July	July State Exam 2026
Tuesday 29 July	ACE Centre Emails Previous Applicants: ACE Centre emails all applicants who remain on the national talent pool or who remain unhired from 2025 and 2026 recruitment rounds inviting them to reapply for the upcoming recruitment round.
Tuesday 4 August	Employers Post Estimated Vacancy Numbers on Employer Websites (optional): Employers are encouraged to post estimated vacancies for each practice setting specialty on employer career websites by COB the day before applications open.
End of Year 2026 Recruitment Round Opens	
Wednesday 5 August, 9am	Applications Open on the ACE RN Website: The ACE application portal automatically opens at 9am to allow applicants to start submitting applications
Tuesday 1 September, 12pm (noon)	Applications Close: 4 weeks for applications to be completed on the ACE RN website
Wednesday 2 September - Friday 11 September	ACE Application Assessments: ACE Centre has 8 working days to assess all completed applications against the national framework criteria and create spreadsheets for each employer of those applicants who have nominated them as one of their 3 preferred employers.
Monday 14 September to Friday 23 October	Employer Interviews and Assessments: Employers determine the number of vacancies they want to fill and have 6 weeks to screen and interview applicants and make their selections to hire, ranking their applicants in preference order. Employers should interview more applicants than places available to ensure their vacancies are filled. However, it is recommended that employers do not rank an applicant they do not wish to hire
Friday 16 October, 5pm	Mid-Year 2026 Talent Pool Closes
Friday 23 October, 5pm	Applicant Edits and Updates Close: Applicants have until Friday 5pm to change their employer preferences, if their change of preferences are not submitted prior to this time they will not be changed.
Tuesday 27 October to Friday 30 October	Electronic Match and Audit Conducted: ACE Centre has 1 week to conduct the electronic match, audit match results and compile matched applicant spreadsheets for each employer.
Friday 30 October	Electronic Match Results Distributed: ACE Centre sends matched applicant lists to employers.
Monday 2 November to 4pm, Wednesday 4 November	Early Talent Pool: Employers going through the Early Talent Pool process have 3 working days to confirm if there are any further people on their Early TP that they wish to employ. Employers are required to email ACE by 4pm Wednesday with any further applicant names.
Friday 6 November, 5pm	Official Match Results/ Employer Spreadsheets Distributed : ACE Centre Emails all employer participants with the full list of electronically and manually matched applicants.
Tuesday 17 November	November State Exam 2026
Wednesday 18 November, 9am	Notification of Match Result Emails: ACE Centre emails all applicants letting them know if successful or not. ACE Centre notifies ALL applicants simultaneously via email whether they have been successful or not.
Wednesday 18 November onwards	Employers Offer Letters: Starting today, employers send offer letters directly to successfully matched applicants formally offering them their position.
Thursday 19 November	End of Year Talent Pool Opens: ACE Centre compiles and opens the national talent pool for employers. ACE Centre also uploads excel copy of spreadsheet to the Portal manually as this excel spreadsheet includes the reference scores while the live TP spreadsheet doesn't. This involves compiling a single spreadsheet of all remaining applicants who have not yet been matched and sending this to all employers. Employers use this list to fill any remaining or subsequent SFYP (NETP)/NESP positions.
Wednesday 25 November, 5pm (or later 7 days after offer letter sent)	Applicants Accept or Decline Employer Offers: Successfully matched applicants have 1 week to accept or reject offers and respond to the employer. If they have not responded by this time they are assumed to be rejecting the offer and the position will be offered to another applicant. The applicant who did not respond will then also be removed from this intake altogether as per the rules following rejection of an offer.
Thursday 3 December	**November State Exam Results Released by NCNZ
From 4 January 2027	Successfully matched nursing graduates begin work with employers, starting dates will vary