

BCCNP

British Columbia
College of Nursing
Professionals

Certified Practices Course Review Policies

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PREFACE

The British Columbia College of Nursing Professionals (BCCNP) approves certified practice courses under the authority set out in the Nurses (Registered) and Nurse Practitioner Regulation (“the Regulation”). Section 8 (1) of the Regulation describes the restricted activities certified practice nurses have the authority to carry out independently. In Section 8 (2) it is stated:

“A registrant may provide a service that includes the performance of an activity described in subsection (1) only as follows:

- (a) to the extent the activity is one described in section 6 (1), without an order as described in section 7 (2) (b) or certification as described in paragraph (b) (ii) of this subsection;
- (b) to the extent the activity is not one described in section 6 (1),
 - (i) in accordance with an order as described in section 7 (2) (b), or
 - (ii) if, before providing the service, the registrant has successfully completed a certification program established, required or approved under the bylaws to ensure that registrants are qualified and competent to provide that service in the practice setting in which it is to be provided by the registrant.

Decisions about course¹ approval are made by the Board following a review and recommendation to the Board by the Education Program Review Committee (EPRC). The certified practices approved by BCCNP and the requirements for certified practice registration are outlined in Schedule G of the Bylaws. Registered nurses who complete BCCNP-approved certified practice courses are eligible to proceed with the certified practice registration process.

Division 8 of the BCCNP Bylaws set the context for these policies.

1. POLICY DEFINITIONS

Approval means the status granted by the Board to the provider(s) of certified practice course(s) that meets the certified practice education standards and enables registered nurses to apply for certified practice registration with BCCNP.

Certified practices means the restricted activities that are subject to regulatory provisions under Section 8 of the *Nurses (Registered) and Nurse Practitioners Regulation*. These provisions require registered nurses to successfully complete a certification program approved by BCCNP before carrying out the restricted activities designated as certified

¹ For the purposes of accuracy and consistency, the term course, rather than program is used throughout this document to describe the preparation for certified practice.

practices. Certified practices are also referred to as BCCNP-certified practices to distinguish them from activities that employers or other organizations certify.

Certified practice course means a course that prepares students with the requirements to be eligible for certified practice registration with BCCNP.

Certified practice course review guidelines means those statements developed by the committee for institutions preparing for a course review. The guidelines supplement board policy by describing suggested courses of action for the purpose of facilitating the review process.

Curriculum means the intended course outcomes and overall design, including the sequence and levelling of learning activities that provide the experiences necessary for learners to achieve the competencies and apply the decision support tools for the specified certified practice.

Letter of intent means the notification submitted to the committee describing plans to offer a new or substantially changed course.

Private institutions means any institution other than: (i) a university established under the *University Act* or other provincial legislation; (ii) BCIT or another institution established under the *College and Institute Act*; (iii) the BC Centre for Disease Control or other public agency; or (iv) another institution that is substantially funded by the provincial or federal government or by a public agency.

1. CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND CONFIDENTIALITY

1A Conflict of Interest

- 1A.1 Each member of the EPRC or expert registrant consulted in the course review process shall sign and abide by the code of conduct approved by the Board.
- 1A.2 The committee shall examine on a case-by-case basis any conflicts of interest at the outset of each course review. Each committee member shall disclose, for examination and decision, any perceived conflict of interest for a member to be involved in a course review.
- 1A.3 Before deliberations begin, course providers (or their official representatives) have the opportunity to bring to the attention of the committee any perceived conflicts of interest related to committee members or expert registrants involved in the course review.

1B Confidentiality

- 1B.1 All information, documents and correspondence about course reviews shall be kept confidential and shall not be disclosed to persons outside the College other than the course providers (or their official representatives).
- 1B.2 A list of currently approved courses is made public by the College. All other details of the review and the decisions remain confidential, subject to the obligations of BCCNP under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

2. FREQUENCY OF REVIEWS

- 2.1 New certified practice courses shall, unless otherwise directed by the Board, be approved for up to a maximum of one year, to allow time for the course provider to collect the evidence required to support the indicators for the standard on course evaluation.
- 2.2 Once evidence to support the indicators for the standard on course evaluation is available, certified practice courses shall, unless otherwise directed by the Board, be reviewed at least once every three years.

3. CERTIFIED PRACTICE EDUCATION STANDARDS

The following are the standards against which certified practice courses shall be reviewed and evaluated:

- (a) Curriculum - The curriculum builds upon the BCCNP Standards of Practice to provide the learning experiences necessary for registered nurses and nursing students² to achieve the certified practice competencies and apply the decision support tools³.
- (b) Students - Students demonstrate progress toward the achievement of the competencies and application of the decision support tools.
- (c) Course Evaluation – Certified practice course evaluations demonstrate student preparedness for practice upon course completion.

4. INDICATORS OF THE CERTIFIED PRACTICE EDUCATION STANDARDS

The EPRC requires evidence to assess whether the certified practice education standards are met. Indicators of the certified practice education standards are listed below. Guidelines for addressing the indicators in a course provider self-evaluation report are provided by the committee.

² Nursing student means a student registered in an entry level nursing education program.

³ Hereafter, the word competencies and the phrase decision support tools means the competencies and decision support tools for the specific certified practice course being reviewed.

4.1 Indicators of the Standard on Curriculum

- (a) The course is clearly described and is congruent with the achievement of the competencies and application of the decision support tools within the context of the BCCNP Standards of Practice, including the scope of practice standards (BCCNP, February, 2020).
- (b) The competencies and decision support tools are systematically introduced, built upon and applied in theory and practice learning.
- (c) When relevant, certified practice competencies are distinguished from the competencies of the larger program in which they are embedded.
- (d) The admission requirements expected of applicants prior to entering the course are identified.
- (e) The achievement of the certified practice competencies and the application of the decision support tools are clearly included in the course learning outcomes.
- (f) The course requires students to achieve the competencies and apply the decision support tools while providing nursing care directly with clients and/or through simulated experiences.
- (g) Mechanisms are in place to ensure the ongoing currency and relevance of the course to certified nursing practice.

4.2 Indicators of the Standard on Students

- (a) Students receive well-timed formative⁴ and summative⁵ feedback about their learning to facilitate their achievement of the competencies and application of the decision support tools.
- (b) Students demonstrate safe nursing care in accordance with the competencies and decision support tools.
- (c) Students have access to sufficient learning resources to support their achievement of the competencies and application of decision support tools.
- (d) Students and preceptors are supported by the optimum number of qualified faculty and/or instructors.

⁴ Formative feedback means the feedback provided before course completion that focuses on identifying progress toward course outcomes. It is the basis of improvement within the course.

⁵ Summative feedback means the feedback provided at course completion about the achievement of the course outcomes.

- (e) Policies and resources are in place that support faculty and/or instructor decisions to remove students from practice settings or fail students.
- (f) Student fitness to practice and public protection are considered in progression, failure and readmission decisions.
- (g) Students who are successful at course completion have achieved the competencies and are able to apply the decision support tools to provide safe, competent and ethical care.
- (h) Mechanisms are in place to maintain the security and integrity of student evaluation materials and processes.

4.3 Indicators of the Standard on Course Evaluation

- (a) A process of formative and summative course evaluation is clearly described and implemented.
- (b) The evaluation process provides the evidence that demonstrates the achievement of the competencies and application of the decision support tools in providing safe, competent and ethical care by students who have completed the course.
- (c) Mechanisms are in place to maintain the security and integrity of course evaluation materials and processes.
- (d) Student course completion rates are monitored, analyzed and used to inform course development decisions.
- (e) Students have opportunities to provide feedback at course completion about how well the course prepared them to practice safely, competently and ethically.
- (f) Certified practice nurses who have completed the course have opportunities to provide feedback at planned intervals about how well the course prepared them to practise safely, competently and ethically.
- (g) Employers (or their designates) familiar with certified practice have opportunities to provide feedback about the achievement of the competencies and the application of decision support tools by certified practice nurses who have completed the certified practice course.
- (h) The results of course evaluations, including the feedback from students at course completion, are used to inform course development decisions.

5. NEW OR SUBSTANTIALLY CHANGED COURSE

- 5.1 A *Substantial change* means the revision of a certified practice course which includes a major change, rather than a formative modification, in one or more of the following:
- how the curriculum addresses the achievement of the competencies and application of the decision support tools, including changes in the nature and extent of learning opportunities in the curriculum;
 - learning resources to support student achievement of the competencies and application of the decision support tools including laboratory and learning experiences with clients;
 - expectations about overall student performance, including evaluation of student practice and policies about safe student performance; or
 - any other significant change that will impact on the ability of the students to achieve the requirements to proceed in the certified practice registration process with BCCNP following completion of the course.
- 5.2 A course provider proposing to offer a new certified practice course, or to make substantial changes to an existing approved course, is expected to submit a letter of intent to the committee and obtain Board approval of the course prior to offering the course or implementing the change.
- 5.3 If a course provider offers a new or substantially changed certified practice course before it is reviewed by the committee and approved by the Board, students who complete the new or substantially changed course will not be eligible for certified practice registration with BCCNP unless the course is subsequently approved by the Board.
- 5.4 Upon receipt of a letter of intent about a substantial change, the committee determines what evidence it requires to assess the change and whether any further review is required before the next scheduled review.
- 5.5 Upon receipt of a letter of intent about a new certified practice course, the committee conducts the review and sends to the Board its recommendation(s) with respect to the approval of the new course.
- 5.6 Modified self-evaluation reports are submitted for courses being discontinued. A review may be required to extend the length of approval needed to enable students

currently enrolled and/or the last intake of students to complete an approved course.

- A *discontinuing course* is one in which the last class of students has been admitted, or the date for the last student intake has been established.
- The purpose of the discontinuing course review is to ascertain that plans are in place to maintain the integrity of the existing curriculum and to support students to achieve the competencies and apply the decision support tools until the course is phased out.

6. COURSE REVIEW PROCESS

- 6.1 The review of a certified practice course may be initiated at the request of the course provider or by the committee.
- 6.2 Certified practice courses offered by private institutions will not ordinarily be recommended by the committee for Board approval unless the private institution is registered with the Private Training Institutions Branch.
- 6.3 Course reviews shall be timed to prevent expiration of current approval.
- 6.4 Following initiation of the review process, the course provider shall submit a self-evaluation report that addresses the certified practice education standards and indicators.
- 6.5 The committee shall review the course according to the standards and indicators for certified practice education and discuss its assessment and tentative recommendation with the course provider/s and/or their representative(s).
- 6.6 Following discussion with the course provider(s) and/or their representative(s), and without their presence, the committee shall complete its assessment and decide on its final report and recommendation to the Board.

7. BCCNP ASSESSMENT OF CERTIFIED PRACTICE EDUCATION STANDARDS

- 7.1 BCCNP assesses each standard as being met or not met.
- 7.2 A standard is assessed as not met when deficiencies are identified in the evidence regarding the indicators of the standards.
- 7.3 When the evidence shows that deficiencies exist or when the evidence available is uncertain, BCCNP assesses the risk to the public in accordance with Policy 9.

7.4 When BCCNP assesses that the deficiencies identified present an imminent or future risk to the public, a recommendation is made to the Board to consider withdrawing approval of the course, as provided for in Policy 10.

8. ASSESSMENT OF RISK TO THE PUBLIC

8.1 The first factor the committee considers when assessing risk to the public is the nature and extent of the deficiencies assessed in the evidence regarding indicators of the certified practice education standards.

8.2 In assessing whether the deficiencies present an imminent or future risk to the public, the committee will give due consideration to the following qualitative and contextual factors:

- (a) specific, realistic plans identified by the course provider to correct the deficiencies;
- (b) the strengths of the course that mitigate any risks to the public;
- (c) evidence that the course provider is acting in an accountable manner regarding the deficiencies and planning for satisfactory improvements;
- (d) evidence of any pattern over time that deficiencies identified during previous reviews were not addressed satisfactorily; and
- (e) the nature and likelihood of any harm resulting from these deficiencies.

9. WARNING OF WITHDRAWAL OF COURSE APPROVAL

9.1 When BCCNP has assessed that there is a risk to the public, it recommends that the Board warn the course provider that approval may be withdrawn. In such cases, the length of the warning period recommended to the Board will be determined in accordance with the guidelines set out in the balance of Policy 10.

9.2 When recommending a warning, BCCNP considers fairness to students enrolled in the course in terms of the impact on their ability to complete the course and be eligible for certified practice registration. Whenever reasonable, the length of warning recommended will allow time for students enrolled in the course to complete an approved course.

9.3 The committee gives consideration to the amount of time needed to allow a course provider a reasonable opportunity to demonstrate satisfactory resolution of the deficiencies identified by the committee.

- 9.4 In cases where a warning is given, BCCNP advises the course provider to provide written information to its current and prospective students about the facts of the approval of the course, including any terms and conditions attached.
- 9.5 The strategies and methods for advising students about the information in 10.4 are decisions to be made by the course provider.
- 9.6 The length of warning the committee recommends may vary because each recommendation is based on a thorough review of the facts and circumstances or context of the particular certified practice course.

10. ACCEPTANCE OF THE CERTIFIED PRACTICE SELF-EVALUATION REPORT

The course provider's self-evaluation report shall adhere to the guidelines developed by BCCNP.

- (a) If the self-evaluation report does not provide sufficient evidence regarding the certified practice education standards for BCCNP to complete its assessment, the committee may give the course provider the opportunity to submit:
 - i) a supplementary report to address particular gaps in the evidence presented; or
 - ii) a revised self-evaluation report with additional evidence about the certified practice education standards.
- (b) In cases of (a) i) or (a) ii) above, arrangements are made with the course provider to reschedule the review, including the date of the submission of a revised self-evaluation report.

11. DECISION OF THE BOARD

The Board, after considering the committee's report and recommendation(s) may:

- 11.1 In the case of a review of a new or substantially changed course:
 - (a) give approval of up to a maximum of one year subject to any terms and conditions as the Board may determine; or
 - (b) where it determines that there is a deficiency, decline to approve the course or withdraw approval.

- (c) If a dispute arises as to whether a change to a course is substantial and, as a result, would constitute a new course requiring a review, the question shall be referred to the Board whose decision shall be final.

11.2 In the case of a review of a previously approved course:

- (a) approve the certified practice course for up to a maximum of three years, subject to any terms and conditions as the Board may determine; or
- (b) where there is a deficiency, the Board may warn the course provider that approval of its course may be withdrawn if the next review does not indicate satisfactory improvement; or
- (c) withdraw approval of the course if the certified practice education standards are not met and a warning was given at the time of the last review.

12. ACTION ON COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1 The Registrar/Chief Executive Officer may act upon recommendations from the committee and communicate them to the course provider on behalf of the Board, when the approval status of the course is not jeopardized by the recommendation. The Registrar/Chief Executive Officer shall report to the Board at the earliest opportunity of the actions taken on its behalf.

12.2 Any committee recommendation to give a warning of withdrawal of approval of a certified practice course places the approval status of the course in jeopardy and shall be sent to the Board for decision before any actions are taken on behalf of the Board.

13. VARYING OF DECISION

Where both the committee and the course provider consent, the Board may vary a decision previously made.

REFERENCES

The following references are available from the BCCNP website www.bccnp.ca

[Nurses \(Registered\) and Nurse Practitioners Regulation](#), Section 8

[Bylaws of the British Columbia College of Nursing Professionals](#), Division 8, Schedule G

[BCCNP Scope of Practice for Registered Nurses: Standards, Limits and Conditions](#)