

Continuing Competence Program Learning Plan Guide

This guide outlines the steps to develop a learning plan to meet of the Continuing Competence Program (CCP) requirements set by the College of Registered Nurses of Nova Scotia (CRNNS) for licensure.

To obtain an active-practising license, each registered nurse (RN) and nurse practitioner (NP) must complete the following components of CCP:

- a) Maintain nursing practice hours or complete nursing education according to the *RN Regulations* (2009) Section 10(g);
- b) Participate in a reflective practice process which includes self-reflection, self-assessment and the development of a learning plan;
- c) Confirm on the initial and annual application for licensure that a learning plan has been completed;
- d) Complete the CRNNS learning plan verification process if randomly selected; and
- e) Pass the mandatory education quiz, when required (not required in 2018 for those renewing their licence for the 2019 licensure year).

How to Develop a Learning Plan

Wherever you are on your career path, a learning plan can provide a road map for your professional development. Continuously learning helps to ensure nurses stay current and are able to provide optimal care.

A learning plan can be a helpful tool in developing your continuing competence. However, it can be difficult to develop a learning plan without guidance and support. In knowing this, CRNNS has outlined three steps to guide your learning plan development and provided tools to support you in this process.

The steps to develop your learning plan include:

Step 1: Complete a self-reflection.

Step 2: Complete a self-assessment against the RN and/or NP Standards of Practice.

Step 3: Develop a learning plan based on information uncovered in the self-reflection and self-assessment.

Please note: Click on the blue words contained in this document to be hyperlinked directly to the resource.

STEP ONE

Self-Reflection

“Self-reflection is a very individual process and there is no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ way to do it, as long as you learn from it.”

Self-reflection is a mandatory component of CCP because it is an important component of learning. Through self-reflection, you examine how your personal values and beliefs affect your approach to situations. It involves exploring, clarifying and understanding past experiences to become more self-aware.

During your self-reflection, think about events in your nursing practice over the past year that may have represented learning opportunities for you. Using any method you choose (e.g., analyzing the situation, journaling, or discussing with a colleague), reflect on this event. Your self-reflection can be enhanced by incorporating information from peer feedback, performance appraisals, and/or multisource feedback¹. To learn more about self-reflection, visit our [online learning module](#).

Self-Reflection Tool - The FRAME™ Method:

One way to complete a self-reflection is to use the FRAME™ Method. This method was developed specifically for nurses for this purpose. By using the step-by-step FRAME™ Method, you can reflect on an event or challenge you experienced in the past year.

The FRAME™ Method is broken down into five steps:

1. **Focus**
2. **Reflect**
3. **Assess**
4. **Make meaning**
5. **Explore**

¹ Peer feedback is an informal and unstructured evaluation of your nursing practice that you solicit from your peers. **Performance appraisal** is a formal and structured evaluation of your nursing practice by your supervisor/manager. **Multisource feedback** is a formal and structured evaluation of your nursing practice by your peers, recipients of care and other interdisciplinary team members. You can incorporate the feedback you receive from any of these methods into your self-assessment to assist you in identifying your learning needs and developing your learning plan.

STEP ONE

Self-Reflection

1. **Focus:**

Think about an event or a period of time in the past year that was challenging or one where you excelled in your professional life.

2. **Reflect:**

Think about the event or period of time using the questions below to guide your reflection:

- What specifically presented a challenge?
- What specifically did I excel at?
- What initiatives did I take that made me proud of my practice?
- What learning opportunities existed?
- What do I feel are qualities of a competent nurse working in today's health care system? How do I enhance these qualities within myself?

3. **Assess:**

Ask yourself the questions below to assist you in your assessment of the situation:

- What went well? What didn't?
- What were my strengths in this situation and how could I build on these?
- How did the people and/or situations that presented a challenge affect my ability to do my job?
- In the situation, was I able to work to my optimal scope of practice² and if not, why?

4. **Make meaning:**

Think about what happened as a result of your actions:

- What would I do differently or the same next time?
- What feedback/response did I get, if any?
- How might I grow and learn from this experience?

5. **Explore your options:**

In case you are faced with this situation again in the future, ask yourself:

- What would help me manage similar situations?
- What do I need to learn to enhance my abilities to better manage this situation next time?
- How can I help a colleague learn from my experience?

² Optimal scope of practice means that individual registered nurses are performing at the highest level of their competencies (knowledge, skills and judgment) and, thereby, making their greatest contribution to client outcomes. (CRNNS Ends document, 2011).

STEP TWO

Self-Assessment

Once you have reflected on your practice over the past year and have identified some significant experiences, you are ready to complete your self-assessment.

A self-assessment is a mandatory component of developing your learning plan because it will help you to determine how well you are meeting the RN and/or NP Standards of Practice.

To guide this process, we have developed two self-assessment tools – one for RNs and one for NPs. These tools are based on the Standards of Practice for RNs and NPs because, as self-regulated professionals, nurses are accountable to know and apply their standards of practice at all times.

Using the Tool

Review each indicator in the self-assessment tool and rate your own practice against each one. Your self-assessment process may be further enhanced by taking into consideration employer and/or organizational standards for your area of nursing specialty.

Self-Assessment Tools:

For your convenience, the tools have been provided in two file formats - PDF and Microsoft Word.

PDF

[Tool One: Standards of Practice for Registered Nurses Self-Assessment Tool: All RNs](#)

[Tool Two: Nurse Practitioner Standards of Practice Self-Assessment Tool: All NPs](#)

Microsoft Word

[Tool One: Standards of Practice for Registered Nurses Self-Assessment Tool: All RNs](#)

[Tool Two: Nurse Practitioner Standards of Practice Self-Assessment Tool: All NPs](#)

STEP THREE

Develop Your Learning Plan

With the knowledge gained from your self-reflection and self-assessment, you are now ready to develop a learning plan. Follow the steps below to develop your plan.

1. Choose a learning plan template.
2. Identify two standards of practice indicators that you want to focus on this year, based on your self-reflection and self-assessment.
3. Develop two SMART objectives (one for each indicator).
4. Identify a minimum of two learning activities that will help you achieve each objective.
5. Develop a prospective evaluation plan.
6. Submit your learning plan to CRNNS by May 24, 2018, if selected for verification ([see page 8](#)). If selected, you are notified by email and mail around March 15, 2018

1. Select a Learning Plan Template

The first step is to select a learning plan template. You can choose to use the learning plan template developed by CRNNS or one of your own design. The learning plan template developed by CRNNS is available in Microsoft Word and PDF formats. Please select the format that works best for you:

- [Develop learning plan in a Word Document](#)
- [Develop learning plan in PDF](#)

2. Identify Two Standards of Practice Indicators

Next, identify two indicators from the [Standards of Practice for Registered Nurses](#) and/or the [Nurse Practitioner Standards of Practice](#) to focus on and include them in your plan.

These could be indicators in which you rated yourself as a “1” or “2” during your self-assessment or indicators you would like to develop to meet your professional goals. Both indicators may be from the same standard.

3. Develop Two Objectives

The next step is to develop a SMART objective for each indicator that will enhance your practice. A SMART objective is specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and timely.

Specific: To set a specific objective you would consider:

- Who is involved?
- What do I want to accomplish?
- What is my time frame?
- What are the requirements and constraints?
- What is the purpose or benefits of accomplishing the objective?

STEP THREE

Develop Your Learning Plan

Measurable: Establish concrete criteria for measuring progress toward the attainment of each objective you set. To determine if your objective is measurable, ask questions such as:

- How much?
- How many?
- How will I know when it is accomplished?

Attainable: The objective should be both possible and realistic while still being challenging. Having an objective that pushes you and allows for personal growth can lead to improvement in your practice.

Relevant: The objective is not only within reach of skill levels but also has meaning and relates directly to your practice and your ability to meet your standards. When an objective is relevant, it increases your commitment and motivation to meet the objective.

Timely: Having a time frame established allows you to monitor your progress, stay on track, make adjustments to meet the overall objective, and gain momentum with each accomplishment along the objective path.

4. Identify Two Learning Activities per Objective

For each objective you have developed for your learning plan, you need to identify at least two learning activities that will help you achieve the objective. The learning activities must occur between July 1, 2018 and October 31, 2019.

Your learning activities can include any education you are required to take as part of your role (e.g. ACLS, certification, etc.) as long as they help you to achieve your objective. Remember to document when you anticipate completing the learning activities.

5. Develop an Evaluation Plan

The evaluation is important because it outlines how you plan to apply learning to your nursing practice and the impact you anticipate it will have. As your learning plan will be implemented after July 1, 2018, you will not be able to evaluate its actual impact before completing your plan.

You need to consider how you will evaluate as you develop this portion of the learning plan. As you implement your learning plan through the licensure year, you can then evaluate your progress.

How will I evaluate?

Think about some ways in which your enhanced learning could impact your nursing practice and the care you provide to your clients. Ask yourself:

1. How will I know if I have obtained my objectives?
2. How will my nursing practice be enhanced?
3. How will the nursing care I provide to my clients change?
4. What impact could a change in my nursing practice have on client outcomes?

Summarize your answers and enter them in the evaluation section of your learning plan.

STEP THREE

Develop Your Learning Plan

6. Submit Your Learning Plan to CRNNS if Selected for Verification

If you are selected for verification, the last step is to submit your learning plan to CRNNS by May 24, 2018. It is strongly recommended that you complete the [Pre-submission Checklist](#) to ensure your learning plan is complete before submitting.

There are two ways to submit your learning plan:

1. **Email:** If you develop your learning plan using Word, attach your learning plan in an email and send it to ccp@crnns.ca.
2. **Website:** If you develop your learning plan using the online fillable form, your learning plan is submitted once you select <Submit> at the bottom of the form. You should receive an automated thank you message when this is complete.

For more information on the verification process, [visit page 8](#).

Additional Resources

Do you still have questions? Please feel free to access any of these resources:

- An online learning module “[How to Develop a Learning Plan](#)”
- [Pre-submission Checklist](#) to complete before submitting your plan to CRNNS for verification.
- Learning plan examples developed by CRNNS. Click on the links below to access these examples.
[Total Hip Replacement](#)
[Stress Management Program](#)
[Wound Care](#)
[Communication Strategies](#)
[Supporting Clients with the Weaning of Benzodiazepines](#)
- Learning plan examples developed by nurses in 2017:
[Cultural Competence](#)
[Dementia Care](#)
[Portacaths](#)
[Wound Care](#)
[Barriers to Care](#)
- CRNNS staff support: We are available to answer any questions you may have. Please contact ccp@crnns.ca or 902.491.9744 / 1.800.565.9744 ext. 229 or 226.

OTHER INFORMATION

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Verification of your Learning Plan

The verification of learning plans is the process of confirming that you have met the requirements established by CRNNS as part of the CCP. Verification of learning plans is considered best practice among nursing regulators in Canada and internationally because it helps to ensure that RNs engage in the CCP.

In 2018, 200 randomly selected members will be selected to submit their learning plan to CRNNS to verify they have successfully completed their learning plan.

If you are selected for verification:

1. you will be notified by email and mail around March 15th, 2018;
2. you will be required to send your learning plan for the upcoming licensure year to CRNNS by Thursday, May 24, 2018. **Please note: the contents of your self-reflection and self-assessment are confidential and are not to be sent with your learning plan.**
3. CRNNS staff will review your learning plan against the [CRNNS's learning plan criteria](#).
 - a) If your learning plan meets the criteria, the verification process will be complete and you will receive notification by email that you have completed the verification process.
 - b) If your learning plan does not meet the requirements, you will receive notification by email and CRNNS staff will submit your learning plan to the CCP Advisory Committee once it has been de-identified.
4. The CCP Advisory Committee, whose role is explained below, will review your learning plan against the [criteria](#).
 - a) If the committee determines your learning plan meets the criteria, the verification process will be complete and you will receive notification by email that you have completed the verification process.
 - b) If your learning plan does not meet the requirements, you will receive feedback by email to assist you in revising your learning plan. CRNNS staff will be available to support you with your revisions.
5. You will submit your revised learning plan to CRNNS for another review. You will be required to re-submit your learning plan until the learning plan is approved.

See the section below entitled [Consequences of Non-Compliance with the Continuing Competence Program](#) which describes what happens if you do not meet the requirements of the CCP before the beginning of the next licensure year.

OTHER INFORMATION

Continuing Competence Program Learning Plan Guide

CCP Advisory Committee

The role of the CCP Advisory Committee is to review any learning plans that have been identified by CRNNS staff as possibly not having met the learning plan criteria and to support the development of mandatory education study material and quiz, if required. The review of learning plans by the committee is an anonymous process and any identifying personal information about the RN, like their name and/or registration number, will be removed before the learning plan is submitted to the committee for review.

The CCP Advisory Committee is comprised of members of CRNNS who hold a current active-practising license and are in good standing. CRNNS will recruit members for the committee based on geographical location and areas of nursing practice. To learn more about volunteering for the CCP Advisory Committee please contact us at ccp@crnns.ca.

Consequences of Non-Compliance with CCP

If you do not meet the practice hour requirement for the CCP, please contact [Registration Services](#) to discuss next steps.

You will be issued a time-limited licence for up to 3 months with or without conditions and/or restrictions on October 31 if one of the following occurs:

1. You do not confirm on your application for initial or annual licensure that you have completed a learning plan based on your self-assessment; or
2. Your submitted learning plan does not meet the CRNNS criteria (if required); or
3. You have not successfully completed the mandatory education (if required).

Your time-limited licence will expire the earliest of these three scenarios:

- a) When a member provides CRNNS with evidence that they have met the criteria.
 - Example: if a member mistakenly indicates that they did not complete the CCP on their licence renewal application but provides CRNNS with evidence that they actually have.
- b) Three months after it was issued.
 - Example: if a member receives a time-limited licence for up to 3 months on June 1, the licence will expire on September 1.
- c) On October 31 of the licensure year for which the time-limited licence was issued.
 - Example: if a new applicant receives a time-limited licence for up to 3 months on September 15 after passing the NCLEX-RN exam but did not complete the CCP, the licence will expire on October 31 since this is the last day of the licensure year.

Once you have met the CCP requirements you will be issued a licence for the remainder of the licensure year.

OTHER INFORMATION

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Mandatory Education

Every two years, a nursing regulatory topic relevant to all active-practising nurses is selected for mandatory education as part of CCP. **Mandatory education is not required in 2018 for members renewing their 2019 nursing licence.**

You will be notified in January any year that you are required to complete mandatory education.

Confidentiality

Any document or information prepared by an RN for the purpose of satisfying the requirements of the CRNNS's Continuing Competence Program (CCP) will be considered confidential. In a legal proceeding, no person will be authorized or required to disclose any information related to the content of a self reflection or self-assessment without the expressed consent of the RN.

To maintain the confidentiality of others, do not document any information in these tools, including your learning plan, which could be used to identify clients, family members or colleagues.

Please remember that CRNNS is here to help if you have any questions.
Contact us at ccp@crnns.ca or 902.491.9744 / 1.800.565.9744 ext. 229 or 226.