



**Nurses Association**  
OF NEW BRUNSWICK

# Approval Review Process: Registered Nurse Re-Entry Programs



## MISSION

The Nurses Association of New Brunswick is a professional regulatory organization that exists to protect the public and to support nurses by promoting and maintaining standards of nursing education and practice, and by promoting healthy public policy.

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## INTRODUCTION

The *Nurses Act* gives the Nurses Association of New Brunswick (NANB) the legislated mandate to establish and maintain standards for nursing education and to approve nursing education programs, including registered nurse re-entry programs in the province.

The purpose of the NANB approval review process is to ensure that re-entry programs meet the NANB *Standards for Nursing Education in New Brunswick* and that program graduates achieve the NANB *Entry-Level Competencies for Registered Nurses in New Brunswick*.

The NANB *Standards for Nursing Education* have been developed by the Nursing Education Advisory Committee in consultation with the university schools of nursing and have been approved by the NANB Board of Directors. The standards serve as the framework for the approval review of re-entry programs in New Brunswick.

Standards are broad, principle based, authoritative statements that articulate the performance required of nursing education programs. The corresponding indicators describe the standard statements by illustrating how each standard is met or demonstrated. The indicator provides the criterion against which the re-entry program's actual performance may be measured.

Graduates of NANB's approved re-entry programs are prepared to practise in accordance with the Canadian Nurses Association's *Code of Ethics for Registered Nurses*, the NANB's *Standards of Practice for Registered Nurses*, and the NANB *Entry-Level Competencies for Registered Nurses in New Brunswick*.

## PURPOSE OF THE REGISTERED NURSE RE-ENTRY PROGRAM

The registered nurse re-entry program is designed to enable:

- 1) non-practising nurses to meet the requirements for registration;
- 2) practising nurses to refresh their knowledge and skills; and
- 3) internationally educated nurses to meet requirements for initial registration.

## ELIGIBILITY FOR ENROLMENT

To be eligible for a registered nurse re-entry program, the applicant must hold a practising or non-practising membership and fit into one of the following categories:

1. applicants for registration who have obtained their nursing education outside Canada, who are required to complete a re-entry program to be eligible for registration;
2. members or former members who have been the subject of disciplinary action by the NANB and who have been required to or choose to take a re-entry program in order to be eligible for reinstatement of registration, membership or the right to practise; and
3. such other persons as may be required or permitted to take a re-entry program pursuant to the ByLaws and Rules.

## NANB APPROVAL REVIEW PROCESS

The NANB Nursing Education Advisory Committee has the responsibility to act in an advisory capacity to the NANB Board of Directors in relation to the approval of registered nurse re-entry programs in New Brunswick. An overview of the process including predetermined timelines is presented in Appendix A. The final responsibility for the approval of re-entry programs rests with the Board of Directors.

### **Frequency of Approval Reviews**

New Brunswick re-entry programs go through an approval review process every five years. In extenuating circumstances, programs may request a deferral of the approval review process for twelve months.

### **Confidentiality**

All communications about the approval of a program are confidential. When the procedure is complete, the approval status of a program given by the Board of Directors will be considered public information.

## APPROVAL STATUS

In accordance with the NANB approval review process, the Nursing Education Advisory Committee will make recommendations to the NANB Board of Directors to grant an approval status to the re-entry program as follows:

### **Approval Granted**

The re-entry program is functioning at a satisfactory level in keeping with the NANB *Standards for Nursing Education in New Brunswick*. The approval status is granted for a five year period.

Notwithstanding the above, a re-entry program may be directed to implement minimal recommendations and report on same within a year from the time the report is received.

Graduates from a program which has received this rating will be considered graduates of an approved re-entry program for the purpose of registration as a registered nurse with NANB.

### **Approval Deferred**

Approval withheld for the time being; recommendations are made to address deficiencies of the re-entry program in meeting the standards.

Action to address the recommendations must be initiated within 12 months after receipt of the report.

Graduates from a program which has received this rating will be considered graduates of an approved re-entry program for the purpose of registration as a registered nurse with NANB.

### **Approval Denied**

Approval is denied when a re-entry program that has been given a deferred approval status fails to present sufficient evidence that the standards are being addressed within 12 months of the date of the deferred approval.

Graduates from a program which has received this rating will not be eligible for registration as a registered nurse with NANB.



## NANB STAFF RESOURCE PERSON

In relation to the re-entry program approval review process, the NANB staff resource person is responsible for:

1. Informing, advising and supporting a re-entry program preparing for the approval visit. The NANB staff resource person is available to the program to discuss the approval review process and also to do a follow-up as required following the approval visit.
2. Consulting with the approval team members prior to, during, and following the visit and responding to general inquiries and correspondence related to the approval review process. The NANB staff resource person does not participate in the decision making about the approval status of a re-entry program.
3. The NANB staff resource person serves as an ex-officio member of the approval review team. This role is comprised of secretariat responsibilities, such as preparing the visit agenda in consultation with members of the approval review team and the re-entry program, facilitating the visit to the program site(s) and facilitating the work of the members of the approval review team.

## APPROVAL REVIEW TEAM

The approval review team will consist of two registered nurses. The selection of the team members will be based on the following criteria:

1. The team leader:
  - a nurse educator with a minimum of a master's degree;
  - recent or current experience in nursing education;
  - recent or current experience in nursing practice or administration;
  - experience in program evaluation would be an asset; and
  - fluent in French and/or English.
2. The team member:
  - a nurse with a minimum of a master's degree;
  - current experience in nursing practice;
  - experience in program evaluation would be an asset; and
  - fluent in French and/or English.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE APPROVAL REVIEW TEAM

1. Prior to the visit, review all documents submitted. Attend all briefing and orientation sessions; identify additional documents that may be required from the re-entry program; formulate interview questions for the visit; finalize the visit schedule; and address concerns and questions concerning the visit.
2. During the visit, meet with appropriate representatives from the re-entry program and clinical agencies, visit educational and clinical facilities, verify and clarify additional documents.
3. At the end of the visit, present a verbal report to the re-entry program of general findings and of recommended approval status.
4. Submit to the NANB Nursing Education Advisory Committee a final written report within three weeks of the approval visit. This report will contain the review results presented in a document based on the NANB's *Standards for Nursing Education* using an NANB template which identifies whether each indicator is being met satisfactorily, partially met or not met. The report will also list strengths and weaknesses of the program, as well as areas in need of improvement. The report will also contain a recommendation regarding approval status.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE REGISTERED NURSE RE-ENTRY PROGRAM

The re-entry program must:

- submit to NANB a self-evaluation based on the *Standards for Nursing Education in New Brunswick*;
- submit to NANB the required documents specified in the *Tool for Approval Review of Re-Entry Programs* (Appendix B)
- suggest dates for the visit which will permit the approval review team to observe various activities;
- schedule meetings with program administration, faculty, students, clinical agencies and others as appropriate; and
- collaborate with requests from team members for additional documents and/or meetings with key stakeholders.

## THE APPROVAL VISIT

The approval visit will be planned for a period which will accommodate the re-entry program keeping in mind there may be more than one delivery site. The visiting schedule will include additional days to allow time for preparation, travel, record keeping and follow-up. The activities of the visit may change according to the team and the particular program under review. The visit will normally take place over a two to three day period.

Administrative processes, the report of the last approval visit, and other relevant matters and structures will be reviewed. The visit will include activities such as observation of students in classroom and clinical situations. The team, individually or together, will meet with students, preceptors, faculty, graduates, and employers of graduates, as well as clinical facility administrators and program administrators. The meetings will be arranged in advance of the visit with as much notice as possible.

The approval review team will meet with the program administrators on the last day of the visit to give a brief verbal report. This will include comments on the indicators being met, partially met or not being met and may also include discussion of the strengths of the program and suggestions for improvement, if appropriate. Clarification or additional information may be provided during this meeting.

## APPROVAL REVIEW PROCESS FOR A CHANGING PROGRAM

The re-entry program shall advise the NANB if substantial changes to the program are being planned for implementation within the approval time frame (5 years).

Substantial changes would include, but are not limited to, alterations in the approved re-entry program which may jeopardize the ability of the graduates to meet the NANB Entry-Level Competencies and professional practice requirements.

Other substantial changes would include: changes in the program philosophy, conceptual framework, curriculum content; major alterations in learning activities including clinical placements; and changes in faculty resources.

Once a change in the program has been identified, the Nursing Education Advisory Committee will, upon review of the change, recommend if the change needs further assessment. This will be based on whether the change is viewed as being positive or negative to the approved program as a whole.

## APPEAL PROCESS

A re-entry program may appeal the approval decision. The notice of intent to appeal must be submitted to the Board of Directors of NANB within 30 days of receipt of the approval status as granted in a decision of the Board.

When a decision is appealed, the previous approval status is maintained until the disposition of the appeal.

Upon receipt of the appeal notice, the Board of Directors appoints an appeal panel within two weeks.

The appeal panel will be composed of three individuals: two nurse educators; one of these being from administration, the third member will be an educator with a specialty in evaluation. This individual may be a nurse or non-nurse. The members of the appeal panel may not be a member of the Nursing Education Advisory Committee, a member of the faculty of the re-entry program which is appealing, or a member of the Board of Directors. All members must be acceptable to the program requesting the appeal.

Representatives for the re-entry program shall present a written rationale for the appeal and may meet with the appeal panel to answer questions and provide additional information.

The appeal panel rules within three months, either to uphold the original decision or to request the Board of Directors to reconsider its decision.

## TOOL FOR APPROVAL REVIEW

The *Tool for Approval Review of Registered Nurse Re-Entry Programs* is found in Appendix B.

For the re-entry program, the tool:

1. serves as a means to prepare for the approval visit;
2. serves as a guide for self-evaluation by identifying if each indicator is met/partially met/not met; and
3. lists additional required information related to each standard.

For the approval review team, the tool:

1. serves as a means to prepare for the program visit;
2. provides a framework for data gathered during the program visit; and
3. guides the approval review team in writing the approval report.

## EVALUATION OF THE APPROVAL REVIEW PROCESS

Once the approval review process is completed, the NANB staff resource person shall initiate an evaluation of the approval review process. The approval review team members, as well as the re-entry program, shall provide evaluation feedback.

## RELEVANT NANB DOCUMENTS

*Standards for Nursing Education in New Brunswick (2013)*

*Entry-Level Competencies for Registered Nurses in New Brunswick (2013)*

*Nurses Act (2002)*

*Code of Ethics for Registered Nurses (2008)*

*Standards of Practice for Registered Nurses (2012)*



## APPENDIX A: Approval Review Process Overview

Approval Review Process	Time Lines
1. Notification to the re-entry program of intent to conduct an approval visit	At least 12 months prior to approval visit
2. Solicit and select approval review team members with input from re-entry program	9 to 12 months prior to approval visit
3. Nursing Education Advisory Committee recommends approval review team members to the Board for approval	9 to 12 months prior to approval visit
4. Final negotiation with the approval review team and signing of contract	6 months prior to approval visit
5. Request for information to the program, i.e. approval tool as a basis for self-evaluation	20 weeks prior to approval visit
6. Re-entry program will submit all requested documents to the NANB staff resource person	6 weeks prior to approval visit
7. The visit is planned to include delivery sites as applicable, over a period of 2 to 3 days	
8. Approval review team leader submits to NANB a written report including a recommendation on the approval status and any recommendations deemed appropriate	3 weeks following approval visit
9. Written report is forwarded by NANB to the re-entry program. The program may respond in writing to NANB	2 weeks following receipt of the report
10. Nursing Education Advisory Committee reviews the report and makes recommendations to the Board	
11. Board of Directors gives a ruling on approval status including any recommendations and informs the re-entry program of its decision	Immediately following the Board meeting
12. If the approval is deferred, the Nursing Education Advisory Committee will oversee follow-up activities	12 months following the approval deferred status





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## APPENDIX B: TOOL FOR APPROVAL REVIEW OF REGISTERED NURSE RE-ENTRY PROGRAMS



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### STANDARD I: CURRICULUM

**The curriculum provides learning experiences across the life span and the continuum of care necessary for students to achieve registered nurse entry-level competencies established by the Nurses Association of New Brunswick.**

Indicators	3	2	1	Documents Received	Follow up during visit
1.1 Entry-level competencies guide the development and implementation of the curriculum.					
1.2 The curriculum describes the program of studies, and includes i) an organizing framework; ii) program goals and expected outcomes; iii) course descriptions; iv) sequence of learning activities; and v) student evaluation.					
1.3 The philosophy of teaching and learning is current, evidence-based and relevant to nursing education.					
1.4 Teaching and learning activities provide students with the opportunity to achieve program goals and expected outcomes.					

- \* 3 = met
- \* 2 = partially met
- \* 1 = not met

### STANDARD I: CURRICULUM

**The curriculum provides learning experiences across the life span and the continuum of care necessary for students to achieve registered nurse entry-level competencies established by the Nurses Association of New Brunswick.**

Indicators	3	2	1	Documents Received	Follow up during visit
1.5 Clinical learning activities provide sufficient opportunities for students to meet the program goals and expected outcomes and the entry-level competencies.					
1.6 Systematic and continuous evaluation of all curriculum components is carried out by students, educators and other key stakeholders to ensure ongoing development, maintenance and enhancement of the curriculum.					
1.7 The curriculum maintains its relevance by responding to current and emerging trends in health care, nursing practice, and nursing education.					
1.8 Learning takes place in a context that is sensitive to linguistic, ethnic, spiritual, cultural and social diversity.					

- \* 3 = met
- \* 2 = partially met
- \* 1 = not met

### STANDARD I: CURRICULUM

The curriculum provides learning experiences across the life span and the continuum of care necessary for students to achieve registered nurse entry-level competencies established by the Nurses Association of New Brunswick.

Indicators	3	2	1	Documents Received	Follow up during visit
1.9 The curriculum prepares students to work collaboratively within nursing and with other health care team members.					

- \* 3 = met
- \* 2 = partially met
- \* 1 = not met

#### Additional Information Required:

- a) copy of the curriculum including learning outcomes
- b) copy of entry-level competencies on which the program is based
- c) guidelines for preceptors and clinical instructors
- d) forms used for evaluating the student's clinical performance
- e) evidence of coordination of clinical experiences



## STANDARD II: PROGRAM

**The program has the resources to support students in achieving the entry-level competencies established by the Nurses Association of New Brunswick.**

Indicators	3	2	1	Discussion	Recommendation
2.1 The organizational structure and leadership support the administration of the program.					
2.2 There are appropriate resources (fiscal, physical, technological, human, clinical) to facilitate the development and implementation of the curriculum and to foster ongoing improvement.					
2.3 Nursing faculty size and composition is sufficient to provide teaching and guidance to students to ensure student progress toward practice-readiness and meeting entry-level competencies.					
2.4 Nursing faculty possesses theoretical nursing knowledge and maintains clinical skills appropriate to teaching responsibilities.					
2.5 Nursing faculty professional development activities support currency and relevance of the curriculum.					
2.6 Nursing faculty works in a culture where the sharing of a common philosophy and values is fostered through peer support, teamwork and team building.					

\* 3 = met

\* 2 = partially met

\* 1 = not met



## STANDARD II: PROGRAM

**The program has the resources to support students in achieving the entry-level competencies established by the Nurses Association of New Brunswick.**

Indicators	3	2	1	Discussion	Recommendation
2.7 Orientation and support strategies for nursing faculty and preceptors are in place to ensure that expectations of student performance are consistent throughout the program.					
2.8 Written agreements between the program and the health care agencies are established to protect the rights of all involved including patients and students.					
2.9 Health care agencies used to provide clinical learning experiences are accredited by the appropriate body.					
2.10 Learning resources including library resources are current, accessible, innovative and consistent with new knowledge and technology.					
2.11 Formal systems and processes are in place to measure program effectiveness including methods to: i) examine and analyze factors contributing to student attrition and success, and ii) obtain feedback from students, preceptors, clinical instructors and other key stakeholders.					

- \* 3 = met
- \* 2 = partially met
- \* 1 = not met

**Additional Information Required:**

- a) Description of the program including the delivery to New Brunswick students
- b) list of current full-time and part-time faculty, their academic preparation, their date of initial appointment their current teaching responsibilities, their relevant clinical preparation
- c) the faculty orientation program
- d) method used to ensure liaison between the re-entry program and the provincial professional association
- e) names of health care agencies involved in the education of students
- f) an example of the written agreements between the program and the affiliated agencies
- g) description of how the liaison between the re-entry program and the appropriate staff of the affiliated agencies are ensured
- h) the approval review team may seek evidence of the existence and confidentiality of the faculty, students and program files

### STANDARD III: STUDENTS

**Students demonstrate progress towards achieving the entry-level competencies as established by the Nurses Association of New Brunswick.**

Indicators	3	2	1	Discussion	Recommendation
3.1 Policies and procedures for students relating to admission, failure, withdrawal, appeal, re-admission and program completion are established, adhered to and are clearly communicated to students, faculty and other key stakeholders.					
3.2 The student evaluation system provides evidence that students are meeting the program goals and expected outcomes.					
3.3 Students have access to support services to assist with their learning.					

- \* 3 = met
- \* 2 = partially met
- \* 1 = not met

**Additional Information Required:**

- a) established policies and procedures regarding admission, failure, withdrawal, appeal and re-admission
- b) information on student admissions for the last 5 years (admission, readmission, and attrition rate)
- c) copy of evaluation forms including those related to the clinical component
- d) the approval review team may seek evidence of the existence and confidentiality of student files

### STANDARD IV: GRADUATES

**Graduates of the program are prepared to practise according to NANB standards and have achieved the competencies required for entry-level registered nurse practice established by the Nurses Association of New Brunswick.**

Indicators	3	2	1	Discussion	Recommendation
4.1 Final evaluation of students confirms the achievement of the expected outcomes of the program.					
4.2 Processes are in place for graduates, employers of graduates, preceptors, clinical instructors and other stakeholders to provide feedback regarding graduates' preparedness to deliver safe, competent and ethical care.					
4.3 Data collected from graduates, employers of graduates, preceptors, clinical instructors and other stakeholders, regarding graduates' preparedness to meet NANB standards and entry-level competencies, is analyzed and used to inform program decisions.					

\* 3 = met

\* 2 = partially met

\* 1 = not met

**Additional Information Required:**

- a) information received from the graduates and other stakeholders of the past five years that informed the continued development of the program
- b) copy of feedback questionnaires to be completed by the student and the preceptor