

## **EDUCATION**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **What will the Board accept to prove compliance with Continuing Education requirements?**

The Board will accept continuing education contact hours approved by the providers/organizations as shown on our website: <http://llr.sc.gov/nurse/Pdf/CompetencyCriteria.pdf>.

If seeking CE for Prescriptive Authority, please see: [http://llr.sc.gov/nurse/PDF/Board\\_Approved\\_Listing\\_for\\_Pharmacotherapeutics\\_Education.pdf](http://llr.sc.gov/nurse/PDF/Board_Approved_Listing_for_Pharmacotherapeutics_Education.pdf).

If you want to take a course not already approved by the South Carolina Board of Nursing, you may petition the Board for acceptance. Please see the link to the application: [Continuing Education Review Application](#).

Below are some helpful education links:

[Competency Requirement](#) (PDF); **(methods of proving competency)**  
[Competency Requirement Criteria](#) - Contact Hours Included (PDF); **(Board approved CE providers)**  
[Board Approved Listing for Pharmacotherapeutics Education](#)

#### **What documentation is required for Continuing Education?**

**Required Documents;** Certificate of attendance that includes:

1. Name of licensee
2. Title of educational activity
3. Date of activity
4. Approving provider/organization name, course number and address
5. Number of contact hours awarded. APRNs: Pharmacology and Controlled Substance hours.

#### **I am a licensed as a practical nurse and would like to further my nursing education. What nursing programs does the Board accept for the education requirement for registered nurse licensure?**

S.C. Code Ann. Section 40-33-32(7) states, "Has completed all requirements for graduation from an approved school of nursing or nursing education program approved by the state or jurisdiction in this country or territory or dependency of the United States in which the program is located."

Registered nursing education programs approved by the SC Board of Nursing are listed on our website: <http://llr.sc.gov/nurse/NurPrograms.html>.

Programs approved by other State Boards of Nursing may be found on the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) web site at [www.ncsbn.org](http://www.ncsbn.org). When you arrive on the NCSBN

home page, select NCLEX Candidates, then Program Codes. This listing includes programs approved by other State Boards of Nursing.

We recommend that you directly contact any school that you are interested in regarding admission requirements and enrollment plans.

**I am interested in RN to BSN programs. What should I be looking for?** In recent years, there have been many new RN to BSN programs established all over the country, including the internet. Some programs are not approved by a Board of Nursing, and may not be accredited.

The South Carolina Board of Nursing is mandated by statute to approve and regulate pre-licensure nursing education programs in the State of South Carolina. Nursing education programs offering baccalaureate nursing courses to registered nurses are not under the mandated jurisdiction of the Board. RN to BSN students are already licensed to practice as registered nurses.

It is important to investigate the approval/accreditation status and credibility of a nursing program before investing time and money in the pursuit of education. Potential nursing students should be aware that any program of study they are considering should be appropriately licensed and approved by a state board of nursing before they enroll in the program. A list of Board-approved SC nursing programs is provided on the Board's website at:

<http://lir.sc.gov/nurse>.

Be sure that your program has:

- US Department of Education accreditation (by one of its approved accrediting organizations)
- National nursing accreditation from one of these organizations:
  - Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE)
  - Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)
  - Commission for Nursing Education Accreditation (CNEA)

**Where can I find a list of RN-to-BSN programs?** Because post-licensure programs are non-jurisdictional, the Board does not maintain a list of post-licensure programs.

**What should I look for in a post-licensure nursing program?** Your goals for your nursing career are important. Some specialty certifications require completion of a program that holds national nursing accreditation. In addition, check with your employer. Some employers may specify which certifications are preferred or accepted within that organization. They may also have a list of programs they prefer that their employees attend, or identify which programs are acceptable for tuition support.

**What is accreditation and why does it matter?** Accreditation is granted to nursing programs after the program has demonstrated it meets nationally-established nursing education standards. Graduation from an accredited program may help qualify to attend other accredited programs when pursuing an advanced nursing degree, and may impact hiring decisions.

**How do I know if my nursing program is accredited?** Nursing programs are accredited through the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN), or Commission for Nursing Education Accreditation (CNEA). You can check the current accreditation status of a SC nursing program

by going to the Nursing Programs list provided on the Board's website at: <http://lir.sc.gov/nurse>, or the accrediting organization's website.

**The program I am considering is online. Is that ok?** The Board does not regulate post-licensure programs nor the format or delivery of a nursing education course. You should check to see whether the school is registered with the SC Office of Higher Education. All post-secondary educational institutions are required by law to register with this office.

**I am interested in a nursing program leading to initial licensure that includes classes that will be offered online.** First, check to see if the program is approved by one of the State Board of Nursing. Then ask yourself if you have the discipline to stay on track with the assignments. This method of study may be more convenient; however, it will require motivation and self-discipline for completing the course. We do suggest that you contact the school directly regarding enrollment plans. Also, we recommend that you make contact with the school and the clinical faculty regarding procedures and availability for clinical experiences. Please be advised that a nursing program whose parent institution is located in another state which conducts clinical experiences preparing students for initial licensure in South Carolina (SC) must obtain SC Board approval prior to conducting clinical experiences in our state.

**I am interested in the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) passing rates for the SC schools.**

The NCLEX pass rates for nursing education programs located in South Carolina are listed on our website: [NurPrograms.html](#).

**Are students who are already registered nurses required to have a current, active South Carolina registered nursing license if they are enrolled in a Master's Degree in Nursing Program and are taking clinical nursing courses in South Carolina?** Yes, students who are already registered nurses are required to have an active, current license in South Carolina or another Compact state when enrolled in a Master's Degree in Nursing Program and taking clinical courses in this state.

**Can I be exempt from taking the English proficiency examination?** To be exempt from having to take an English language proficiency examination, you must meet the following two requirements:

1. Your entry-level professional education must have been completed in an English-speaking country; **AND**
2. English must have been the language of instruction, including the language of the textbooks. If you meet these **two criteria**, you do not need to take an English language proficiency examination.

**Can I use my "on the job training and experience" to take the NCLEX?**

S.C. Code Ann. Section 40-33-32(C) states, "Credit may not be given in an initial application for an unapproved correspondence course or for experience gained through employment...."

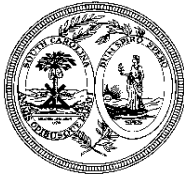
However, "the board shall accept applicants for the National Council Licensure Examination-PN who:

- (1) have successfully completed an approved nursing education program for professional nursing within the past five years of the date of the application;

(2) have received an equivalent education from an approved nursing education program within the past three years of the date of the application.”

Please see our LPN by Equivalency fact sheet at:

[http://llr.sc.gov/nurse/pdf/LPN\\_Equivalency.pdf](http://llr.sc.gov/nurse/pdf/LPN_Equivalency.pdf).



## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

- 1. I am presently licensed as a practical nurse and would like to further my nursing education. What nursing programs does the Board accept for the education requirement for registered nurse licensure?**

Requirements for licensure as a registered nurse in South Carolina (SC) include completing all requirements for graduation from an **approved** nursing education program.

Registered nursing education programs approved by the SC Board of Nursing are listed on our website. Please select education and then nursing programs.

Programs approved by other State Boards of Nursing may be found on the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) web site at [www.ncsbn.org](http://www.ncsbn.org). When you arrive on the NCSBN home page, select NLCEX Candidates and then Program Codes. This listing includes programs approved by other State Boards of Nursing.

We recommend that you contact any school that you are interested in directly regarding admission requirements and enrollment plans. Also, SC licensure requirements may be found on our website under applications/ forms. When you apply for licensure with the Board, education documents (transcript, certificate of endorsement/ nurse administrator endorsement, etc.) must be from an approved nursing program and must be mailed directly from the school to the Board of Nursing.

Also, please refer to question #3 below.

- 2. I am interested in RN to BSN programs. What should I be looking for?**

The South Carolina (SC) Board of Nursing does not regulate RN to BSN programs as they do not lead to initial licensure as a registered nurse.

Also, you may find it helpful to check with the national accrediting agencies, e.g. the Accreditation Commission for Nursing Education (ACEN) [www.acenursing.org](http://www.acenursing.org) or the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) at [www.aacn.nche.edu](http://www.aacn.nche.edu) or with the State Board of Nursing in the state where the program is located at [www.ncsbn.org](http://www.ncsbn.org) (please choose Boards of Nursing from the home page and then contacts).

- 3. I am interested in a nursing program leading to initial licensure that includes classes that will be offered online.**

**First**, check to see if the program is approved by one of the State Boards of Nursing (please refer to question #1 for more information). Then ask yourself if you have the discipline to stay on track with the assignments. This method of study may be more convenient, however, will require motivation and self-discipline for completing the course. We do suggest that you contact the school directly regarding enrollment plans.

Also, we recommend that you make contact with the school and the clinical facility regarding procedures and availability for clinical experiences. Please be advised that a nursing

program whose parent institution is located in another state which conducts clinical experiences preparing students for initial licensure in South Carolina (SC) shall obtain SC Board approval prior to conducting clinical experiences in our state.

**4. I am interested in the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) passing rates for the SC schools.**

The NCLEX pass rates for nursing education programs located in South Carolina (SC) are listed on this web site. Please select education and then nursing programs.

**5. Are students who are already registered nurses, required to have a current, active South Carolina (SC) registered nursing license if they are enrolled in a Master's Degree in Nursing Program and are taking clinical nursing courses in South Carolina?**

Yes, students who are already registered nurses are required to have an active, current license in South Carolina (SC) or another Compact state when enrolled in a Master's Degree in Nursing Program and taking clinical courses in this state. The requirements for licensure as a registered nurse in SC may be found on this web site under applications and forms.