



College of
Registered Nurses
of Manitoba

Information for Candidates who fail the NCLEX-RN

Registered Nurse Regulation & the RN Entry-to-Practice Exam

Graduate Nurse Registration

Why do people fail the NCLEX?

What can I do to be better prepared?

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Source

Sample Learning Plan

Registered Nurse Regulation & the RN Entry-to-Practice Exam

As of April 17, 2017 there is no longer a three-write maximum for applicants writing the NCLEX.

Canadian-educated applicants now have as many attempts as are possible within the three years immediately following the completion date of their nursing education programs.

Internationally educated nurses have as many attempts as are possible within the three years immediately following the completion date of either their clinical competence assessment (if bridging is not required) OR the bridging program, whichever was completed most recently.

Pearson Vue requires that candidates wait a minimum of 45 days between NCLEX attempts. If you apply for the NCLEX before the 45 days has passed, your Authorization to Test (ATT) will be issued with a validity period starting 45 days after your previous attempt.

Graduate Nurse (GN) Registration

Information for registrants who currently hold graduate nurse registration with the College:

- You can continue working after one exam failure. We will send you an email with your new GN expiry date which is three weeks from the date of the exam result. You will need to apply for exam eligibility, book your exam with Pearson Vue and notify the College of your exam date in order for your GN licence expiry date to be reversed to its original date.
- You are responsible for ensuring that your GN license is valid at all times when working as a GN.
- Applicants who fail the exam two times are not eligible for graduate nurse registration.
- Graduate nurse registration expires at 11:59 p.m. the day following notification of the second unsuccessful attempt at the exam. Applicants must inform their employer of their new GN expiry date. The College will also contact your employer to confirm that they are aware of your GN expiry date after the second unsuccessful exam. The College does not disclose exam failures to employers.

Why do people fail the NCLEX?

Some of the most common reasons include:

1. Partial or incomplete integration of nursing content

Failure of the exam may indicate that you are weak in one or more areas of nursing content or that you have not sufficiently integrated your knowledge of nursing to respond to situations typically encountered by entry-level registered nurses (e.g. prioritizing the delivery of care for multiple clients).

As a first step to correcting this:

- reflect on your level of nursing knowledge and the extent to which you have integrated this knowledge
- ask yourself if there are areas of nursing knowledge and practice that you found particularly difficult in your nursing program, clinical experience, in preparing for the exam or in the exam you have recently taken
- review the Candidate Performance Report received after each unsuccessful exam attempt to assist in identifying areas of focus
- evaluate the study methods you used for your previous exam (s). Identify new and different study methods for preparing to re-take the exam.
- develop a learning plan to assist you in your preparation. A sample learning plan is included at the end of this document.

You are the best source to identify your weaknesses. Discuss and confirm your strengths and weaknesses with others that you trust and believe can provide you with accurate feedback, e.g., educators, supervisors, peers and colleagues.

2. Unfamiliarity with Exam Format

The NCLEX consists of multiple-choice and alternate format questions presented through Computer Adaptive Testing (CAT) model. Not everybody is as familiar with this type of testing as they might be with other forms of testing. All answers are marked as either correct or incorrect; there are no marks for knowing some of the answer. [*Information regarding CAT is available on the NCSBN website.*](#)

3. Stress of Writing Exams

What type of stresses do you have in your life right now? Is it the best time to be writing this major exam or do you need to deal with the stresses in your life first and take the exam when life is more relaxed?

Exams can be very stressful. Stress is an appropriate response to events in our lives. It becomes problematic if our level of stress is too high and we cannot cope effectively. Fatigue and undue stress can affect your performance on the exam. Planning in advance for the exam, scheduling your time effectively for studying, doing other activities and resting can help reduce your level of stress.

4. Inadequate Preparation

Some exam writers are unsuccessful because they did not adequately prepare. You should be creating an exam preparation plan that builds in sufficient time to allow you to thoroughly review your material. Part of your preparation should also include utilizing the NCLEX resources provided by NCSBN. We strongly recommend exam writers use the [*NCLEX Detailed Test Plan*](#) as a framework to ensure you have reviewed all key content areas.

What can I do to be better prepared?

A positive attitude can be a strong ally. Have confidence in yourself. Use the experience you have gained from your previous attempt to pass the exam. One advantage that you have this time is that you are familiar with the exam format, how it is administered and what happens on the day of the exam. You can use the Candidate Performance Report you received to assist you in identifying areas where further review and preparation are needed.

Keep in mind that you have successfully completed your nursing education and have taken remedial steps to correct your weaknesses. If you have prepared for the exam and rested well the day before, you will have taken the best steps toward success.

Suggested Resources

There are resources available on the NCSBN website that you should review before the exam. Some of these key documents are:

- [Candidate Bulletin](#)
- [Candidate Rules](#)
- [Detailed Candidate Test Plan](#)
- [Information about Computer Adaptive Testing](#)
- [FAQs](#)

The College does not require or endorse any specific third party NCLEX prep resources. We refer all NCLEX writers to the exam resources located on the NCSBN website. Please note that the Detailed Candidate Test Plan is the blueprint of the exam and should be used as the foundation for studying. A review of the activity statements and self- assessment of learning needs should be used to inform choice regarding any additional resources used.

If you require further information or help, please contact the College's Registration Advisor at 204-789-0661.

Source

Some of the information in this document was taken from the College of Registered Nurses of British Columbia's document Information for candidates who fail the NCLEX-RN.

Sample Learning Plan

Step 1: Identify Learning Needs

Review your candidate performance report. What were your strengths? What did you struggle with?

What factors do you feel contributed to your previous lack of success on the exam?

Review the following resources on the NCSBN website:

- [*Candidate Bulletin*](#)
- [*Candidate Rules*](#)
- [*Detailed Candidate Test Plan*](#)
- [*Information about Computer Adaptive Testing*](#)
- [*FAQs*](#)

Review the activity statements in the Detailed Candidate Test Plan. Identify the activity statements that you feel comfortable answering related questions. Identify the activity statements that you experience difficulty answering related questions.

Your answers to the previous two questions will identify areas that require **content** review.

Review the NCLEX item types listed in the test plan. Are there item types that you have more difficulty answering?

Think back to your previous exam, were there specific items or types of questions that you struggled with?

Your answers to the two previous questions will identify areas of review required to become comfortable with **NCLEX-style** questions.

Step 2: Create a Learning Plan

From the information gathered in step 1, identify gaps in knowledge. If there are many gaps you may want to use additional paper or a spreadsheet. Identify a timeline for review. Identify a resource that will address the knowledge gap. Identify when you are confident that the gap has been addressed.

Gap in Knowledge Identified	Resources	Target Date	Date Completed
Management of Care			
Safety and Infection Control			
Health Promotion and Maintenance			
Psychosocial Integrity			
Basic Care and Comfort			
Pharmacological and Parenteral Therapies			
Reduction of Risk Potential			
Physiological Adaptation			
NCLEX-style Questions			

It may not be readily apparent which resources will be most suitable to address the identified gaps. Assess the previous resources that you used. Were the questions challenging enough? Did they cover the content identified in your learning plan? The College does not require or endorse any specific third party NCLEX prep resources. You will need to choose resources that will specifically address your knowledge gaps. You may want to read resource reviews or talk with your educational institution to identify which resource best matches your needs.

For more information or guidance, please feel welcome to contact a Registration Advisor at 204-789-0661.



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