



## Policy 5.1 Continuing Competence

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### Policy

BCEN® recognizes the importance of continuing competence in the nursing profession and supports the definition that continuing competence is the ongoing ability to integrate and apply the knowledge, skills and judgment with the attitudes, values, and beliefs required to practice safely, effectively, and ethically in a designated role and setting.

Competence, as a construct, is conceptualized as the intersection of affective, cognitive, and psychomotor domains. It is not within the scope of BCEN recertification programs to assess the affective and psychomotor domains; however, the attainment of knowledge, within the cognitive domain, overlaps and influences the other domains, which subsequently translates this knowledge into skilled action in a manner that best serves the consumer. BCEN's recertification programs require that BCEN certificants provide evidence of knowledge attainment through relevant professional activities, with the expectation that this knowledge will be adopted into practice and lead to improved outcomes in safety and quality of care for clients and stakeholders. Recertification requirements protect the public by requiring BCEN certificants to provide evidence of activities related to knowledge attainment.

For BCEN, the evaluation of the construct of competence is operationalized through recertification requirements. Continuing competency, as defined above, assures the public and other stakeholders that a CEN®, CFRN®, CPEN®, CTRN® or TCRN® is held accountable for lifelong learning and retains mastery across all of the domains of the respective content outline.

BCEN supports recertification as a means of encouraging individuals to continue activities essential to the maintenance of knowledge and continuing competence required for their level of practice and certification in emergency nursing, transport (both ground and flight) nursing, pediatric emergency nursing or trauma care nursing. BCEN's recertification process is comprehensive, assessing the same content areas as initial certification, including clinical experience/performance and professional issues. Certificants must recertify every four (4) years.

BCEN offers certificants multiple options for recertification: Continuing Education (CE) by Attestation, retaking a current form of the examination and Internet-based testing (IBT). At present, CENs can use any of the three recertification options; however, CFRNs, CPENs, CTRNs, and TCRNs can use only the first two recertification options. Recertification program requirements foster the growth of knowledge and skills by setting expectations for the review of evidence-based practices from research studies provided in CE offerings or academic study, by the updating of exam content outlines from role delineation survey research, and the independent study required in order to precept students, provide podium or poster presentations, write examination items or author an article. Research in the certification industry reveals that clinical practice as apart of current employment is one of the best indicators of continuing competence because we learn by doing.

BCEN recertification by CE advances lifelong professional education by requiring that a nurse earn 100 contact hours (1 hour = 60 minutes) of CE that have a clear and direct application to the practice of emergency nursing, transport (flight or ground) nursing, pediatric emergency nursing or trauma care nursing, over each 4-year period a nurse holds certification. Credit options via this method include attending courses in "Clinical" and "Non-clinical" (i.e., educational offerings that are related to the professional practice of nursing, such as Legal Aspects of Nursing or Medical Ethics) categories, delivering presentations, teaching courses, attending college courses, writing book chapters, writing test items, and writing journal articles. CE credits must be earned during the previous 4 years to be eligible, supporting the emphasis on currency and ongoing educational experiences.

Recertification by exam requires that certificants take the same examination offered to certificants earning their initial certification. BCEN typically conducts role delineation studies (RDS) for its exam programs every 5 years to ensure that exam content is current and relevant. Thus, certificants who elect to recertify by exam are exposed to new test forms with new test specifications based on the most current RDS. Obtaining a passing score on a current form of the examination attests to the certificants ability to not only maintain the knowledge essential to emergency, transport (flight or ground), pediatric or trauma nursing but to stay abreast of changes in the profession.

Recertification by IBT consists of a 150-item “open book” exam in which certificants have a 30-day window in which to complete the exam. Items are developed specifically for the IBT (i.e., not previously used test items), and a separate passing score study is conducted per standard psychometric practice. Items on the IBT follow the content outline but are written with the intent that resources are needed to answer the questions, thus providing a learning experience. Because of the focus on learning, this recertification method was created with the intent that resources would be necessary to answer the questions. The use of current resources is encouraged with a list of resources supplied on the BCEN website.

## Procedure

1. To recertify with CE by Attestation, certificants must submit their CE Recertification by Attestation application online via their BCEN Account, along with the appropriate fee, before their certification expiration date. Details regarding CE requirements are listed on BCEN’s website. Policy 5.2 details the procedure for processing CE recertification.
2. To recertify by examination, certificants must submit a recertification by exam application online via their BCEN Account along with the appropriate fee. Certificants are given 90 days to schedule and sit for the exam. It is recommended for certificants to submit the recertification exam application a minimum of 90 days prior to certification expiration
3. To recertify by IBT (CEN only), certificants must submit a recertification by IBT application online via their BCEN Account, along with the appropriate fee, a minimum of 60 days prior to their certification expiration. Certificants are given a total of 30 days to complete the exam. The IBT must be completed before certification expiration.

Approved: September 2017

Next Review: June 2019