



Introduction

ANCC defines competency as "...behavior based on beliefs, attitudes, and knowledge matched to and in the context of a set of expected outcomes as defined by nursing scope of practice, policy, code of ethics, standards, guidelines, and benchmarks that ensure safe performance of professional activities." (*Scope and Standards of Practice for Nursing Professional Development*, ANA, 2000.) Nursing Skills Competency Programs accredited by ANCC are combined educational/evaluative experiences designed to be consistent with recognized criteria and provide evidence of the learner's satisfactory ability to perform a particular skill set at a given point in time. A credentialing process for these programs has been developed to provide consumers, employers, and credentialing bodies with a consistent, measurable expectation of the knowledge and abilities of the graduate of a skills competency program accredited by ANCC.

Consistent adherence to all ANCC accreditation criteria for the Nursing Skills Competency Program is expected of the accredited Nursing Skills Competency Program for the full credentialed period. It is NOT required that the provider of a Nursing Skills Competency Program be accredited by the ANCC Accreditation Program as a provider of continuing nursing education. In order to receive ANCC accreditation, Nursing Skills Competency programs may be provided only by single entities. They are not co-provided.

Application Instructions

In addition to the Organization and Program Information form, the Nursing Skills Competency Program accreditation application is composed of two pieces – Proof of Eligibility and Support for Program Criteria. Please be certain to address each of the "**Supporting evidence**" bullet points in each section. All documents and attachments must be clearly labeled following the application outline.

Supporting evidence should be provided as a series of narrative statements or documents, written in a concise and easily understood manner. The goal is to explain as clearly as possible how your organization's educational program meets the eligibility and program criteria. Supporting exhibits may be integrated with the narrative or accumulated in a separate section of the report.

When your application is complete:

- Check that all attachments are properly labeled following the application outline
- Sign and date the Attestation Form
- Consolidate all materials in one complete package. Materials may be submitted in printed and/or electronic format. Acceptable electronic formats include CD or flash drives. All electronic documents must be compatible with Microsoft Office applications and must be titled to match the application outline.
- Mail the completed documents to:

Nursing Skills Competency Program
American Nurses Credentialing Center
8515 Georgia Avenue, Suite 400
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3492

If you have questions about your application, please contact the ANCC Accreditation office at 301.628.5261.



Proof of Eligibility/Administrative Criteria

A wide variety of healthcare and health-related organizations and entities may apply for ANCC accreditation of a Nursing Skills Competency Program. Some examples of eligible entities include acute care facilities, universities, specialty nursing organizations, proprietary education providers, and constituent member associations.

Organizations applying for ANCC accreditation of a Nursing Skills Competency Program must meet the following criteria:

I. Sponsoring Entity

A. The sponsoring entity ensures ongoing adherence to the essential elements listed below:

- i. Adherence to current ANCC Accreditation criteria for the Nursing Skills Competency Program
- ii. Communication with ANCC Accreditation Program staff in the following areas:
 - Requests for data from ANCC
 - Organizational changes
 - Change in program administrator
 - Curricular changes, e.g. changes of objectives, content, practice opportunities or time frame
 - Termination of Program

Supporting evidence:

1. Describe the people - and their qualifications - who are responsible for administration (logistical arrangements, follow-up, communication, etc.) of the Nursing Skills Competency Program. Include evidence of the qualifications relative to understanding of measurement techniques and of competency-based evaluation.
2. Describe the role(s) played by each of the people described above.

iii Acknowledgement of ANCC Nursing Skills Competency Program accreditation and use of appropriate language on marketing materials and verification of completion documents.

“_____ is an ANCC-accredited Nursing Skills Competency Program. Expiration date: _____.”

iv Recognition that accreditation status does not imply ANCC Commission on Accreditation approval or endorsement of commercial products nor does it imply an endorsement of the participant in a Nursing Skills Competency Program.

Supporting evidence:

1. Signed attestation form (see end of Proof of Eligibility section, page 4).



II. Records

- A. Records are confidential, securely maintained for a minimum of six years and retrievable as needed by authorized personnel.

Supporting evidence:

1. Describe where and how records are stored, how confidentiality is maintained and how records are secured, maintained and retrieved by authorized personnel.
2. Attach a copy of the policy on authorized release of records.

- B. A current syllabus for the Nursing Skills Competency Program must be on file.

Supporting evidence:

1. Submit the syllabus.
2. Describe how the syllabus is kept current in regard to changes to objectives, content and time frames, showing dates changes were made.

- C. The following items must be maintained in the file:

- Names of participants (with unique identifiers), date of completion and testing results.
- Location where Nursing Skills Competency Program was provided (if applicable)
- Names and qualifications of presenter/content experts
- Program format, e.g. conference, simulation, distance education (methodology)
- Sample of written verification of participation and successful completion of the Program
- Copy of marketing materials for the Program, e.g. brochure, activity announcements
- A current syllabus
- Summaries of participants' evaluations of the program
- Competency testing material
- Summary of testing outcomes
- A description of the actions taken to ensure the consistency of the content taught and skills observations with that which was tested by the Nursing Skills Competency Program. Please include the data generated by these actions
- If multiple evaluators are used, include a description of the actions taken to ensure that the skill(s) observations performed by the evaluators are consistent across evaluators. Please include the data generated by these actions.
- Enduring materials used in the course delivery
- References and resources used for course delivery
- Planning minutes and summaries of course change(s) with the rationale(s) for the change(s)

Supporting evidence:

1. Describe the procedure used to keep the records stated above.
2. Submit, if available, any tools (e.g. checklists) used to ensure complete records are maintained.

IV. Attestation Form

The provider of the Nursing Skills Competency Program adheres to all applicable state and federal laws and regulations and to all policies and procedures (including proof of eligibility and program criteria) referenced within this application.

Supporting evidence:

1. Submit a signed attestation statement. See following page.



Attestation Form for the Nursing Skills Competency Program

The signature below of the _____ [Title] indicates that the entity providing the Nursing Skills Competency Program complies with all applicable internally established policies and procedures – including Proof of Eligibility and Program Criteria documented in this application – and all applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

Name (please print/type) _____

Signature _____

Date _____



Program Criteria

I. Assessment

An assessment of the environment and/or the learners supports the need for the Nursing Skills Competency Program.

Supporting evidence:

1. Describe how the need for the program was assessed.
2. Describe how the target audience was identified.

II. Planning

A. Planners:

- At least two individuals collaboratively plan the Nursing Skills Competency Program activity.
- Each individual must have relevant education and experience.
- The following areas must be represented on the planning committee: a. relevant content expertise; b. target audience (i.e. if RNs are the target audience, an RN must be on the planning committee); c. knowledge and experience in education design, particularly as it applies to training and competency-testing programs; d. expertise in the application of the Nursing Skills Competency Program skills/knowledge in settings consistent with needs of the target audience. One individual, as appropriate, may represent multiple areas on the planning committee.
- The planning process is free of bias or undue influence.

Supporting evidence:

1. Identify the criteria used to select the planners of the activity.
2. List the experience, education, and expertise of the planners of the program. If the program has been revised since its inception, provide information about the planners of the most recent revision.
3. Describe how conflict of interest and/or bias is prevented from entering the content design of the Nursing Skills Competency Program.

B. Teaching Strategies: Teaching strategies are congruent with objectives and content.

Supporting evidence:

1. Describe how teaching strategies are chosen to enable participants to meet program objectives.

C. Curriculum (Syllabus and Outline): The curriculum supports the goal of the program through relevant/realistic objectives, content, time frames, and teaching strategies.

Supporting evidence:

1. Submit a syllabus or learning plan for the entire program. Components must include:
 - a. Purpose or Program goal (Learner will be qualified to _____)
 - b. Measurable objectives defined in terms of learner outcomes
 - c. A full description of the content related to and consistent with each objective and activities associated with each portion of the skill being addressed.
 - d. Time allocated, consistent with objectives/content
 - e. Content which is contemporary and reflective of commonly accepted standards of practice. (Identify the standards, benchmarks, etc. that were used in development/revision of the course.)



Program Criteria continued...

2. Submit the instructional materials to be used. (If instruction is to be electronic, submit the web site or discs.)

- D. Learning Environment: The learning environment supports the curriculum and provides needed resources for learners.

Supporting evidence:

1. Describe how the learning environment was selected.
2. Describe how the learning environment provides the needed resources for learners.
3. Physical facilities, if appropriate: Describe how sites selected for the program accommodate teaching strategies, environment comfort, and target audience accessibility.
4. Distance learning, if appropriate: Describe how learners access the learning environment.
5. Distance learning, if appropriate: Describe how technical support is maintained.

- E. Method and criteria to validate competency: Individuals are informed (prior to enrollment in the Nursing Skills Competency Program) how the provider of the program will validate the competency of the learner relative to the course material. Learner outcomes are critical elements for the skill or skill set. Critical elements are single, discrete, observable behaviors that are mandatory for acceptable performance of the designated skill. The evidence of learner achievement may be specified in terms of knowledge acquired, skills developed, and/or attitude changed. This must include a demonstration by the learner of the skills taught. The skill(s) must be demonstrated in a setting that integrates the critical thinking skills with the observable application of the skill. Application may be demonstrated in a practice setting or in a setting that incorporates all characteristics of the complex practice setting.

Supporting evidence:

1. Provide all tools used for each evaluation component, e.g. post-test, skills oversight & checklist, etc. Describe how the tools were developed, including validation procedures (e.g. test/re-test, two forms of the test compared with each other, etc.) and outcomes measures.
2. Describe how satisfactory learner achievement is determined and how criteria for successful completion are determined (e.g. must receive 80% on written test, etc.). If the program includes multiple components (didactic, demonstration, clinical, practice, etc.), successful completion of each component must be described. List the specific criteria for evaluation in each area evaluated (knowledge/skills/attitude).
3. Describe how prospective participants are informed of these criteria.

- F. Participants receive written verification of successful completion of the Nursing Skills Competency Program. Verification must include, at a minimum, name of the participant, name and address of the providing organization, name of the program, date of successful completion, expiration date of the accreditation of the nursing skills competency program, and the date at which the individual must re-qualify in the skill. The verification must be provided on the accredited Nursing Skills Competency Program certificate paper authorized and provided by ANCC.

Supporting evidence:

1. Describe what documentation participants receive to validate completion of the Nursing Skills Competency Program.
2. Provide the template of the planned written verification of successful completion including the statement, "_____ is an ANCC-accredited Nursing Skills Competency Program. Expiration date: _____".



- G. There is a method to validate a person's successful completion of the Nursing Skills Competency Program to potential or current consumers/employers when authorized by the participant.

Supporting evidence:

1. Describe how the organization will handle requests from third parties about a participant's Nursing Skills Competency Program completion status.

III. Implementation

A. Presenters:

- Presenters have knowledge and expertise in the content area and in educational principles.
- The program is implemented in a manner that is free of bias or undue influence.

NOTE: The presenter of the course must be proficient at what is being taught.

Supporting evidence:

1. Describe criteria used in selection of presenters for the Nursing Skills Competency Program.
2. Describe the method or reasons those particular qualifications were chosen.
3. Submit data for each current presenter that illustrates their educational background, content expertise, and knowledge of educational principles.
4. Provide evidence that the presenter has had education/training in the competency area and evidence that they have been performing it proficiently.
5. Provide documentation that the presenter(s) has/have experience in skill training and assessment. (Be aware that the instructional approaches in teaching skills differ somewhat from traditional CE, so background in strictly CE teaching may not be sufficient.)
6. Describe how conflict of interest and/or bias is prevented from entering the implementation of the Nursing Skills Competency Program.

- B. Evaluators/Mentors*: Evaluators/Mentors have appropriate knowledge, expertise, and attitudes to teach/evaluate the skills of the learner in the skills being taught.

*A trusted expert and guide who has the skill, knowledge, or experience, sufficient to decide on the merits of an action.

Supporting evidence:

1. Describe how evaluators/mentors are chosen, trained, and evaluated to ensure they have the needed knowledge, skills, and attitudes to successfully function in this role.
2. Describe criteria used in selection of mentors for the Nursing Skills Competency Program.
3. Describe the method or reasons those particular qualifications were chosen
4. Submit data for each current mentor that illustrates their educational background, content expertise, and knowledge of educational principles.
5. Provide evidence that the mentor has had education/training in the skill or skill set addressed in the nursing skills competency program and evidence that they have been performing it proficiently.
6. Provide documentation that the mentor(s) has/have experience in skill training and mentoring.
7. If multiple evaluators/mentors are utilized, provide a description of the actions taken to ensure that the skill(s) observations performed by the evaluators are consistent across evaluators. Please include the data generated by these actions.



Program Criteria continued...

IV. Evaluation

- A. Program: The Nursing Skills Competency Program is appropriately monitored to ensure its quality, effectiveness, and unbiased nature. Changes in the Program are made as needed.

Supporting evidence:

1. Describe how and how often the program is or will be monitored on an ongoing basis, and revised as needed.
2. Describe how the presence (or absence) of bias is evaluated.
3. Describe who and how the responsibilities associated with termination of the program will be managed.

- B. Curriculum: The curriculum of the Nursing Skills Competency Program is evaluated annually by the learners, faculty, program planners, evaluators/mentors, and administrator. Components must include, at a minimum, objectives, content, time frames, teaching strategies, presenter effectiveness, evaluation strategies and competency criteria (pass/fail 'cut' score), practice change outcomes, and learning environment.

Supporting Evidence:

1. Describe how each component of the curriculum is evaluated.
2. If the Nursing Skills Competency Program has already been implemented and changes have been made in the curriculum on the basis of the evaluation process, describe the changes and the rationale for each change.

- C. Learner Feedback: Learners have an opportunity to provide input into the learning experience. Components must include, at a minimum, achievement of each program objective, usefulness of the content for practice, change in practice as a result of successfully completing the Nursing Skills Competency Program, effectiveness of each presenter, appropriateness of the teaching strategies, and appropriateness of the physical facilities (if used).

Supporting Evidence:

1. Provide a copy of the evaluation tool used by participants to evaluate the program.
2. Provide a summary of participant evaluations from the most recent delivery of the program, if already provided.
3. If the Nursing Skills Competency Program has already been implemented, give specific examples of how evaluation data have influenced the ongoing program.

- D. Practice Impact: Evaluation includes analysis of how learners have implemented the program-designated skill sets in practice.

Supporting Evidence:

1. Describe how follow-up data are collected from program participants or other appropriate end-users (agencies, schools, etc.).
2. If the Nursing Skills Competency Program has already been implemented, give specific examples of how follow-up practice data have influenced the on-going program.

- E. Appeal: The learner is provided with options to pursue if the learner does not achieve the criteria for successful completion of the Nursing Skills Competency Program

Supporting Evidence:

1. Describe the appeal process – its conditions, its processes, its possible outcomes. Provide supporting evidence for the description such as policies or appeal panel reports or minutes.



Program Criteria continued...

- F. Re-Qualification (optional): There is a clearly defined process for re-qualification of individuals who have successfully completed the initial program.

Supporting Evidence:

1. Describe the process for re-evaluating the outcomes (on the Program graduate, on the entity upon whom/which the skill is applied) of the Nursing Skills Competency Program. (This is a summative evaluation of "C" and "D" above.)
2. Identify and defend the specific actions required of the learner to meet re-qualification requirements.
3. Identify and defend the timeframe within which the Nursing Skills Competency Program graduate must re-qualify in the skill.