



Canadian Nurse Educator Institute  
L'Institut canadien des infirmières enseignantes

# CCCI Exam Booklet

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*Certification Examination*



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## General Information

### Purpose of Canadian Certified Clinical Instructor (CCCI) Certification

Certification for the clinical instructor represents a national mark of excellence in educating nursing students in the clinical setting, to ensure they are adequately prepared with the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to work in a wide-range of practice settings and specialty areas, and meet the entry-to-practice competencies. It communicates to institutions, students, and the community that the clinical instructor has achieved and maintains a high academic standard in this area of nursing practice. Those candidates who are successful on the CCCI exam will earn the Canadian Certified Clinical Instructor designation, including the right to include it in their signature, and the CCCI pin.

### Goal of the CCCI Certification

The primary goal of the CCCI certification is to promote high-quality clinical instruction in Canada by fostering excellence among clinical instructors teaching nursing students in the clinical setting.

### Clinical Instructor Field of Nursing

CCCI certification recognizes knowledge and expertise related to their role in monitoring and evaluating students in clinical settings; developing good patient assignments; mentoring and coaching students; and creating a positive learning environment for students.

### Scope of the CCCI Certification Examination

The CCCI examination assesses candidates on their knowledge and expertise related to their role in monitoring and evaluating students in clinical settings; developing good patient assignments; mentoring and coaching students; and creating a positive learning environment for students.

These requirements are outlined in the below six competencies.

#### **1. Enacts the educational role and responsibilities of clinical nursing instructors in preparing baccalaureate nursing students for entry into the profession.**

##### Indicators

- Recognizes that the clinical instructor role is an educational role that requires the effective use of teaching and learning principles and strategies.
- Articulates the need for clinical instructors to understand the curriculum and how the objectives of the clinical course align with the curriculum.
- Articulates a clear understanding of the objectives and assessment modalities of the clinical course.
- Recognizes that the clinical instructor's role is to facilitate the student's progress in meeting the learning objectives.
- Identifies their own learning needs and seeks appropriate information about educational program expectations, the curriculum, clinical course and the agency.
- Collaborates effectively with faculty in the delivery of a clinical course.
- Describes the responsibilities of the clinical instructor in preparing the student for a clinical practice setting.
- Collaborates effectively with the service agency's administration and staff when teaching nursing students.
- Differentiates between the role of the preceptor, the practice nurse and the clinical instructor.

## **2. Integrates ethical principles and understands legal obligations of a clinical instructor.**

### Indicators

- Articulates key ethical principles that guide clinical instructing including respecting the confidentiality of student, patient and agency data, and demonstrating fairness and integrity.
- Models the integration of ethical principles and ethical care delivery to students and guides students in ethical care delivery.
- Practices according to ethical, legal and professional standards of the profession.
- Understands and respects policies and processes for evaluating and grading students, as well as the appeals processes of the educational institution.
- Identifies relevant resources for clinical instructors.

## **3. Creates a positive learning environment for nursing students**

### Indicators

- Collaborates with students to establish respectful and supportive relationships.
- Facilitates student learning through mentorship and coaching.
- Explains how a clinical practice course is a learning experience and that students' knowledge and skill development is progressive
- Identifies personal biases and avoids premature judgements regarding students' performance.
- Utilizes effective communication strategies when interacting with agency and partner organization staff, patients/clients, and families to create a supportive environment for student learning.
- Describes diverse teaching and learning styles, adult education principles, the development of a lesson plan, and self-directed learning approaches.
- Applies learning strategies that reflect adult education principles, facilitates self-directed learning, and takes into account students' learning styles.

## **4. Applies key theoretical principles of clinical instructing in acute care settings**

### Indicators

- Utilizes the learning objectives of the clinical course to support student learning.
- Describes key considerations that guide effective patient assignments in an acute care setting.
- Integrates best practices in leading pre-clinical and post-clinical conferences.
- Describes a typical day instructing students and the clinical learning activities that facilitate students' progress in meeting the course objectives.
- Provides timely and effective feedback to students that facilitates their progress in meeting the course objectives.
- Assesses students' comprehension and knowledge acquisition in the clinical setting.
- Sets priorities when working with multiple learners of varying abilities.
- Utilizes constructive strategies to address common clinical learning challenges.
- Facilitates the development of learner reflexivity.

## **5. Applies key theoretical principles of clinical instructing in public health and community settings**

### Indicators

- Liaises with community resources and agencies.
- Utilizes best practices in conducting group learning sessions to facilitate meeting course objectives.
- Manages distance supervision of multiple learners and multiple sites effectively.
- Sets priorities when communicating with preceptors, learners and agencies.
- Explains and justifies the selection of site visits vs telephone support vs email support.
- Utilizes constructive strategies to address common clinical learning challenges.

## **6. Analyzes and evaluates nursing students' clinical knowledge and skills**

### Indicators

- Uses a variety of methods to observe and analyze nursing students' level of clinical knowledge and skills throughout a clinical placement.
- Questions students respectfully and skillfully to assess preparation and knowledge.
- Identifies common challenges of clinical instructing that need to be addressed including the underperforming or failing student, behavioral and/or ethical issues among students, and inadequate or inappropriate preparation for clinical practice.
- Recognizes and responds to differences in learning pace and styles.
- Applies constructive strategies that enable positive learning experiences and outcomes in response to common student issues during a clinical placement.
- Develops and monitors learning plans for students to address knowledge gaps and/or performance issues.
- Assesses potentially problematic behaviors of students during a clinical placement and addresses these in a timely and constructive manner.
- Formulates an evaluation of the students' achievement of the learning objectives of the clinical course.
- Utilizes effective communication strategies to deliver evaluation results to students in a supportive and respectful manner.

## **About the CCCI Examination**

### **Eligibility Requirements to Write the CCCI Exam**

The requirements for eligibility to write the CCCI Exam are as follows:

- a. The candidate must be a registered nurse with a current licence in their province or territory.
- b. The candidate must hold, at minimum, a baccalaureate degree OR have successfully completed the Canadian Clinical Instructor Certification Course, offered by CASN's CNEI.
- c. The candidate must have a minimum of three years of clinical instructing experience OR successfully completed the Canadian Clinical Instructor Certification Course, offered by CASN's CNEI.
- d. The candidate must have completed professional development courses in clinical education.  
NB: Completion of the Canadian Clinical Instructor Certification Course satisfies this requirement.
- e. The candidate must pay the exam fees.

## Nondiscrimination

CASN makes every effort to remove the possibility of discrimination of candidates based on age, gender, race, sexual orientation, citizenship, disability, or other factors. Each candidate's eligibility is evaluated based on the abovementioned criteria, which are independent of these identifying factors.

The online multiple-choice question format helps to mitigate the possibility of discrimination in marking.

For information regarding accommodation requests, please see the section "Special Accommodations for Candidates" below.

## Exam Blueprint

There are 100 multiple-choice, independent questions covering six competency categories:

- |   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| 1. Clinical Nursing Instructor Role         | 20%-25% of questions |
| 2. Ethical Principles and Legal Obligations | 10%-15% of questions |
| 3. Creates Positive Learning Environment    | 15%-20% of questions |
| 4. Acute Care Setting                       | 10%-15% of questions |
| 5. Public Health and Community Setting      | 10%-15% of questions |
| 6. Evaluate Clinical Knowledge              | 20%-25% of questions |

All questions are scored as correct or incorrect.

The examination will be accessible over a two-day testing window. During this time, the candidates will write the exam in a single two-hour sitting, in a setting approved by CASN, with an invigilator identified by the candidate and approved by CASN.

Each exam writer is responsible for identifying an appropriate invigilator to supervise the administration of the CCCI exam.

An appropriate invigilator

- must not be in conflict of interest with the process or results of the exam;
- must not be a student or teaching assistant of the exam writer;
- must not have written nor be intending to write the CCCI exam;
- can be faculty or staff of any department in the institution where the exam writer is employed;
- must be present in the room where the exam is written, for the duration of the exam; and
- must be approved (in writing) by the dean/director/chair of the nursing department or an immediate supervisor.

After an appropriate invigilator is identified by the exam writer, their name and contact information must be forwarded to CASN before 14 days from the exam writing window. CASN will contact the invigilator directly with more information on their role and responsibilities. Following the exam sitting, CASN will send the invigilators an honorarium of \$50 to acknowledge their participation in the process.

The candidates will

- complete the application form that will be sent by e-mail;
- recruit an invigilator to proctor their exam sitting;
- arrange for a setting in which to take the exam (as approved by CASN);
- with supervision of the invigilator, utilize the login credentials supplied by the exam provider (the login credentials will expire once the exam has been completed, or the exam testing window has ended); and
- complete the exam during the testing window.

The invigilator will

- take responsibility for ensuring the exam writing process follows the CASN guidelines (as sent directly to the invigilator); and
- receive an email on the day of the exam from the exam provider, with a link to the secure exam site and instructions on how to access the system. The system should not be accessed until the test writer is ready to begin as the exam is timed.

## Preparing for the Examination

### RECOMMENDED REFERENCE

Oermann, M., Shellenbarger, T. & Gaberson, K. (2017). *Clinical Teaching Strategies in Nursing* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company, LLC.

### SAMPLE QUESTIONS

The correct answer is in **bold**.

#### Sample Question 1:

As a clinical instructor in acute care you notice that your student appears to be confidently preparing IV vancomycin for a patient but is actually making gross errors. As you consider how you will respond, you plan to incorporate the five principles of providing feedback into your approach. This will include which of the following:

- a. Meeting with the student following the clinical placement to review what was wrong with the IV preparation.
- b. Providing positive reinforcement regarding the student's ability to complete this course.
- c. Providing clear information on the use of the pharmacy IV medication guide that the student referenced.
- d. **Giving immediate verbal and visual feedback about safe administration of IV vancomycin.**

#### Sample Question 2

Which of the following is the most important consideration in selecting clinical assignments for students?

- a. Students' need for continued exposure over time
- b. **Individualized learning needs of students**
- c. Staffing needs of the clinical placement unit
- d. Resources of the clinical placement unit



## Certification Renewal

CCCI certification lasts for five years. To renew your CCCI certification after five years, you must provide CASN with an e-portfolio consisting of, at minimum, one component from each of the following areas:

### Personal teaching philosophy

- Your teaching and learning philosophy statement and evidence of ongoing professional development activities related to teaching.

### Practice

- Sample teaching strategy you have implemented into your clinical teaching.
- Sample of a planned pre/post clinical conference.
- Sample of your management of unsuccessful student performance.
- Sample of an evaluation process you have used.

### Commitment to continuing competence

- Attendance at conferences, workshops, retreats relevant to clinical instructing and/or nursing education.
- Bibliography of relevant research articles read.

Applications for certification renewal will be reviewed by a board of specialists. Applications must be submitted at least 2 months prior to January 1 of the year of certification expiry.

## Applying for the examination

Potential applicants must complete the registration form sent to eligible candidates.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure all information and supporting documents are submitted, that the information provided is accurate, and that all deadlines are met. The eligibility requirements listed above must be met.

The application will be considered complete when all requested documentation has been supplied, the form is accurately completed and the application fee has been submitted.

Please note that the name and address on the application form must match the information on the valid identification that will be used at the writing centre.

## Fees

CCCI Examination	Applicant from CASN member school	Other applicants
Initial Testing	\$200	\$250
Retest	\$200	\$250

## Verification

CASN staff will verify the information on the application to ensure the eligibility requirements have been met. All information will be kept confidential.

## Special Accommodation for Candidates

If a disability prohibits you from taking the examination under standard conditions, you may request a special accommodation as part of your online application. Please include a letter formally requesting accommodation, specifying the accommodation you require, and a letter from a professional (physician, psychologist, therapist, counsellor, nurse) who is able to provide a formal diagnosis and specific guidelines for the accommodation required. Once your application has been processed, staff from CASN will contact you to discuss special arrangements.

## Examination Administration

### Scheduling an Examination

There is a two-day examination-writing window, during which all writers must complete the exam.

Writers may take the exam any time during the two-day exam window. It is unlikely that you should need technical assistance; however, please note that should you require technical assistance it is only available during regular business hours (8:30 am – 4:30 pm Eastern time).

One week prior to the exam, access to an online exam demo will be sent to you. Please review the demo prior to writing your exam to familiarize yourself with the functionality and administration of the exam. It is recommended that you review the demo on the computer on which you will be taking the exam. Please note that it is recommended that candidates write the exam using Google Chrome or Firefox web browsers. Other web browsing applications may work, but cannot be guaranteed.

### Missed Appointments and Cancellations

If you miss your scheduled exam, there will be no refund as the exam fee covers the administrative costs involved in setting up the exam writing schedules.

To withdraw formally from the exam, contact CASN at [inquire@casn.ca](mailto:inquire@casn.ca). Staff will confirm your withdrawal and send you information on how to reapply. There will be an administrative fee of \$50.

If you withdraw less than 5 working days before the exam period, a late fee of \$100 will apply.

If you withdraw less than 5 working days before the exam period because of illness or for compassionate reasons (e.g., sudden illness in the family), you will not be charged the late fee if you can provide written verification (note from a physician). Documentation must be provided within 5 days of the withdrawal.

### Inclement Weather, Power Failure, or Emergencies

If you are unable to write the exam due to inclement weather, power failures, or emergencies, your exam writing time will be rescheduled.

### Taking the Examination

The CCCI examination is coordinated by an exam provider and is administered using online software on a computer you arrange for at your place of employment.

Before arranging for a place to write the exam and an invigilator, ensure that you have applied to CASN and have received confirmation of eligibility to take the CCCI exam.

## **Examination Restrictions**

- No personal items, including but not limited to mobile phones, hand-held computers/personal digital assistants (PDAs) or other electronic devices, pagers, watches, wallets, purses, hats (and other non-religious head coverings), bags, coats, books, and/or notes, pens or pencils are allowed in the testing room.
- No additional time will be added to the writing time if the exam writer chooses to take a break.
- Exam writers cannot leave the testing room during the exam writing time without supervision of the invigilator.

## **Confidentiality of Examination Questions**

All examination questions are the property of the Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing and it is forbidden to copy, reproduce, record, distribute, or display the examination questions by any means.

## **Misconduct**

During the examination, the following actions will be considered misconduct and will result in your application being terminated:

- Using any books, papers, notes, calculators, or electronic or audio visual devices including organizers, iPods, pages, phones, or other recording devices
- Speaking or communicating in any form with another exam writer
- Purposefully exposing your responses to another exam writer
- Looking at the responses of another exam writer
- Removing or attempting to remove or copy exam material from the exam writing spot
- Failing to follow the directions of the invigilator
- Attempting to record examination questions or make notes
- Attempting to take the examination for someone else
- Attempting to tamper with the computer
- Attempting to access the internet or other reference material

## **Denial, Suspension, or Revocation of Your Certification Credential**

Your CCCI credential will be denied, suspended, or revoked if you engage in any of the following activities:

- Falsifying any information requested in the certification process
- Misrepresenting your CCCI certification status
- Cheating on the CCCI exam
- Disclosing exam questions or responses, in whole or in part, in any form or by any means (oral, written, electronic, on the internet, or on any social media platforms)

## **Following the Examination**

### **Scoring and Report**

You will receive confirmation of your examination results from CASN. Please note that candidates will only be informed of a pass or fail, and not of a specific score.

### **Requests for Hand Scoring**

The examination scoring is via computer-based testing (the computer instantly records the response provided by the candidate) and hand scoring is not relevant. No hand scoring will be provided.

## **Candidates Who Pass the Examination**

Candidates who pass the examination will receive official notification and information on the appropriate use of the designation Canadian Certified Clinical Instructor™ (CCCI). They will also receive a certificate and a CCCI pin.

## **Candidates Who Do Not Pass the Examination**

Candidates who do not pass the examination will receive official notification. Candidates who are not successful on the examination may apply to rewrite the examination at the next examination window. Exam fees will apply. Candidates are eligible to write the exam up to three times.

## **Confidentiality**

Any information collected through the application and verification process will be kept confidential except in instances where the law requires disclosure of facts. Information about candidates for testing and results are considered confidential. Studies or reports on examination process and results will contain no information identifiable with any candidate unless authorized by the candidate.

## **Policies**

### **Examination Appointment Changes**

The examination window is two-days long and examination times can be changed within the window, with the agreement of the invigilator.

### **Authorized use of CCCI™**

The use of the CCCI credential is limited to individuals who have been successful on the examination and continue to meet the requirements for renewal of the certification.