2017 NCLEX® Examination Candidate Bulletin

The NCLEX® candidate bulletin contains information for all registrations and scheduling of NCLEX appointments beginning January 1, 2017. Additional information is available at www.ncsbn.org

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EXAMINATIONS

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Contact Information

Contact Pearson VUE for questions regarding:

- Registering to take the NCLEX
- Methods of payment
- Authorization to Test (ATT) Email
- Scheduling/rescheduling an exam appointment
- Acceptable forms of identification
- Comments about the test center

Visit: NCLEX Candidate website, **www.pearsonvue.com/nclex**

Call: NCLEX Candidate Services (Pearson VUE)

United States and Canada – Call at (toll-free) 1.866.49NCLEX (1.866.496.2539), Monday – Friday, 7 am to 7 pm, Central Standard Time. For French support call 1.866.288.8454.

Asia Pacific Region – Call NCLEX Candidate Services at (pay number) +852.3077.4923, Monday – Friday, 9:00 am to 6 pm, Hong Kong Time.

Europe, Middle East, Africa – Call NCLEX Candidate Services, at (pay number) +44.161.855.7445, Monday – Friday, 09:00 to 18:00, Central European Time.

India – Call NCLEX Candidate Services at (pay number) 91.120.439.7837, Monday – Friday, 9 am to 6 pm, Indian Standard Time.

All other countries not listed above – Call (pay number) 1.952.905.7403, Monday – Friday, 7 am to 7 pm, Central Standard Time.

Candidates with hearing impairments who use a Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) – Call the U.S.A. Relay Service at (toll-free) 1.800.627.3529 or the Canada & International Inbound relay service at (pay number) 605.224.1837. These services are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Write: NCLEX Examination Program
Pearson Professional Testing
5601 Green Valley Drive
Bloomington, MN 55437-1099

Email: pvamericascustomerservice@pearson.com

Contact the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, Inc. (NCSBN®) for questions regarding:

- NCLEX development
- General NCLEX information
- General questions/inquiries relating to examination administration

Visit: NCSBN website, **www.ncsbn.org**

Write: National Council of State Boards of Nursing, Inc.
Examinations Department
111 E. Wacker Drive, Suite 2900
Chicago, Illinois 60601-4277

Call Examinations Department: 866.293.9600

Email: nclexinfo@ncsbn.org

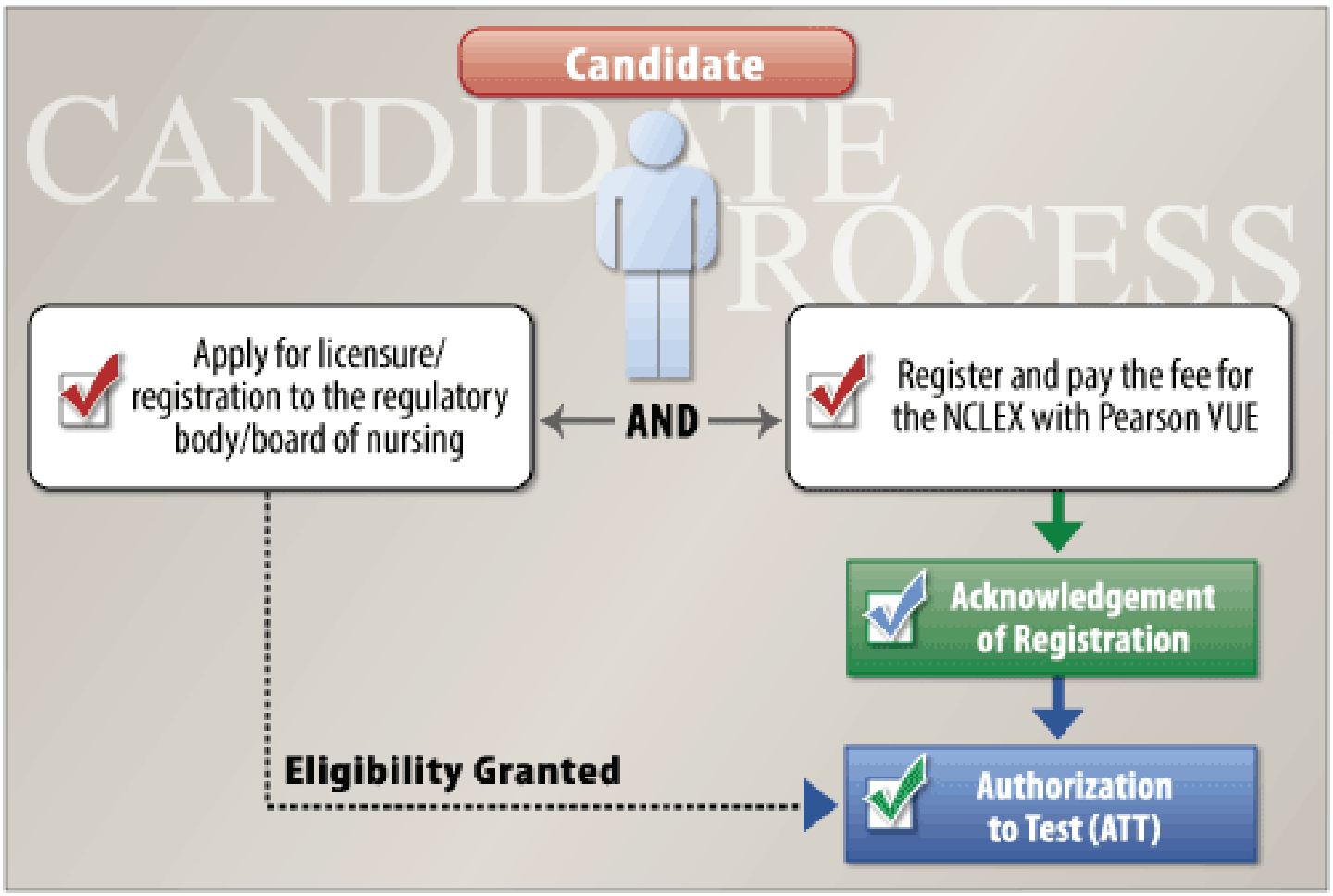
Contact your board of nursing/regulatory body (BON/RB) for questions regarding:

- Licensure/Registration
- BON/RB application
- Name or address changes
- Name corrections on your ATT email

Links to BON/RB websites and contact information are available **online**.

Examination results are sent to you by your BON/RB. Wait a minimum of six weeks following your examination for your results to arrive.

Join NCLEX on Facebook and Twitter!



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

In April 1994, nurse licensure candidates began taking the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX®) on computers at test centers located across the United States (U.S.) and select international sites. The change to computerized adaptive testing (CAT) for the nurse licensure examination came about as a result of a decision made in August 1991 by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN®). The NCLEX is only provided in the CAT format.

The NCLEX is given on a computer. You are not expected to know how to use a computer before you take the examination. There will be a tutorial at the beginning of the examination that will instruct you on the use of the mouse and how to record an answer. An on-screen calculator will be available during the examination. The majority of NCLEX items are multiple-choice but there are other formats as well. **All item types are scored as either right or wrong. There is no partial credit.**

The NCLEX is designed to test knowledge, skills and abilities essential to the safe and effective practice of nursing at the entry level. Both the NCLEX-RN® and the NCLEX-PN®* are variable length, computerized, adaptive tests. The NCLEX is not offered in paper-and-pencil or oral examination formats.

The **NCLEX-RN** examination can be anywhere from 75 to 265 items. Of these items, 15 are pretest items that are not scored. Regardless of the number of items administered, the time limit for this examination is six hours.

The **NCLEX-PN** examination can be anywhere from 85 to 205 items. Of these items, 25 are pretest items that are not scored. The time limit for this examination is five hours.

It is important to note that the time allotted for the examination includes the tutorial, the sample items, all breaks (restroom, stretching, etc.) and the examination. All breaks are optional.

NCLEX results are an important component used by boards of nursing/regulatory bodies (BONs/RBs) to make decisions about licensure/registration. **Only BONs/RBs can release NCLEX results to candidates.**

*The NCLEX-PN is used for U.S. licensure only.

NCLEX® REGISTRATION PROCESS OVERVIEW

1. Submit an application for licensure/registration to the board of nursing/regulatory body (BON/RB) where you wish to be licensed/registered.
2. Meet all of the BON's/RB's eligibility requirements to take the NCLEX.
3. Register for the NCLEX with Pearson VUE.
4. Receive NCLEX Registration Acknowledgement email from Pearson VUE.
5. The BON/RB makes you eligible in the Pearson VUE system.
6. Receive Authorization to Test (ATT) email from Pearson VUE.
7. Schedule your exam with Pearson VUE.

Please note that all correspondence from Pearson VUE will arrive **only** by email.

If more than two weeks have passed since you have submitted a registration for the NCLEX and received acknowledgement from Pearson VUE, and you have not received an ATT email, please call Pearson VUE NCLEX Candidate Services at the appropriate number listed on Page 1 of this bulletin.

For educational program code information, please reference the Candidate Bulletin & Information web page at **www.ncsbn.org/1213.htm**. If the code for your program is not listed, please contact your BON/RB.

TEST FEES AND POLICIES

Fee	Candidates Seeking U.S. Licensure	Candidates Seeking Canadian Licensure/Registration
Registration Fee	$200 USD	$360 CAD
Additional International Scheduling fee (+value added tax where applicable)	$150 USD	$150 CAD
Change board of nursing/regulatory body after registration fee	$50 USD	$50 CAD
Change exam type (RN/PN) after registration fee	$50 USD	Not Applicable
Change exam language (English/French) after registration fee	Not Applicable	$50 CAD
Licensure/Registration Fee	Contact board of nursing	Contact regulatory body

No Refunds

There will be no refund of NCLEX registration fees (telephone or via the Internet) for any reason, including, but not limited to:

- Duplicate Registrations
- Failure to reschedule and/or cancel your exam appointment outside of 24 business hours
- Failure to appear for your appointment

Do not submit another registration and fee before calling. If you decide to submit an additional registration, first stop payment on the original payment, verify the stop-payment was processed, then contact Pearson VUE at the appropriate number listed on Page 1 of this bulletin.

Additionally, there will be no refund of the international scheduling fee or VAT for any reason.

Failure to Pay

A candidate may not take the NCLEX if the registration fee has been stopped either by the candidate or a financial institution. If payment is stopped after the candidate takes the examination, NCSBN and the boards of nursing/regulatory bodies (BONs/RBs) reserve the right to hold and/or cancel the candidate's result.

Registration Time Limit

All NCLEX registrations will remain open for a 365-day time period during which a board of nursing/regulatory body (BON/RB) can determine a candidate's eligibility. This time period begins when the BON/RB receives the candidate's NCLEX registration from the test service. Once a candidate is made eligible, he or she must test within the validity dates printed on the ATT.

Candidates who are not made eligible or are denied eligibility by their BON/RB within the 365-day time period will forfeit their NCLEX registration, including the registration fee. Candidates who wish to take the NCLEX will need to reregister and pay another examination fee. You must wait until your current registration expires before reregistering. A candidate may not have two NCLEX registrations (of the same exam type) open at the same time.

1. **Submit an application for licensure/registration to the board of nursing/regulatory body (BON/RB) where you wish to be licensed/registered. Be sure to meet that BON's/RB's application deadline.**
2. **Register for the NCLEX using one of the following methods:**

INTERNET REGISTRATION

Visit the NCLEX Candidate website (**www.pearsonvue.com/nclex**) to register.

- You can pay for your registration by credit, debit, or prepaid card, using one of the following: VISA, MasterCard or American Express.
- Have your credit card ready when you begin your registration.
- An email address is required when registering via the web.

TELEPHONE REGISTRATION

Call Pearson VUE NCLEX Candidate Services at one of the numbers listed on Page 1 of this bulletin.

- An email address is required when registering over the phone.
- You can pay using a valid VISA, MasterCard or American Express credit, debit, or prepaid card.
- Have your credit card ready when you make your telephone call. You must provide the name shown on the credit card, the credit card number and the expiration date.

THIRD-PARTY PAYMENTS

Nursing schools, agencies or employers may register and administratively pay for the NCLEX on behalf of the candidate.

Visit **www.pearsonvue.com/nclex** and complete a registration for the candidate or call Pearson VUE NCLEX Candidate Services at one of the numbers listed on Page 1 of this bulletin. Third party payments may be paid for by credit, debit, or prepaid card using one of the following: Visa, MasterCard or American Express.

TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

Testing accommodations for otherwise qualified candidates can be provided only with the authorization of your board of nursing/regulatory body (BON/RB).

- Request information from your BON/RB concerning its requirements for receiving testing accommodations. This should be done before submitting your NCLEX registration to Pearson VUE.
- Make a written request for accommodations to your BON/RB. Your request must comply with requirements established by your BON/RB for candidates requesting testing accommodations.
- Send your request to your BON/RB as early as possible so that, if approved, the testing accommodations can be made in a timely manner.

Do not schedule an appointment to take the NCLEX until you have received written confirmation of your accommodations and your ATT email listing the granted accommodations.

Candidates approved for testing with accommodations must schedule their testing appointment by calling Pearson VUE NCLEX Candidate Services at the telephone number listed on their ATT and asking for the NCLEX Accommodations Coordinator. Candidates with accommodations cannot cancel their accommodations at the time of their appointment.

Candidates who seek to test with accommodations **cannot** schedule their appointments through the NCLEX Candidate website.

AUTHORIZATION TO TEST (ATT)

After your board of nursing/regulatory body (BON/RB) declares you eligible, you will receive your ATT email.

You must have your ATT to schedule an appointment to take the NCLEX. If the name on your ID does not match exactly the first and last names you provided when registering (as listed on your ATT), you will not be admitted to the examination and will be required to reregister and pay another exam fee to take the examination.

- The ATT email contains your authorization number, candidate identification number and an expiration date.
- The ATT is valid for a period of time specified by the BON/RB (the average length of an ATT is 90 days).
- Once the BON/RB declares you eligible to test and your ATT is issued by email, you must test within the validity dates of your ATT.
- **The ATT validity dates cannot be extended for any reason. If you do not test within these dates you will have to reregister and pay another examination fee.**

YOUR EXAM APPOINTMENT

Test centers may fill up quickly because of high volumes and previously scheduled special events. Waiting to schedule your testing appointment may significantly limit the selection of dates from which you can choose to schedule. Additionally, if you wait until your ATT is close to expiring, the test center may not be able to seat you prior to its expiration. If this occurs, you will be required to reregister and pay another examination fee.

First-time test takers will be offered an appointment within 30 days of the call, or online attempt, to schedule an appointment; repeat candidates will be offered an appointment within 45 days. If you wish, you may decline the appointment offered and schedule later than the 30 or 45 days.

If you fail to arrive for your examination appointment or fail to reschedule/unschedule without giving the appropriate notice (as outlined on page 6), you will forfeit your examination fee (and scheduling fee if applicable) and your ATT will be invalidated. You will be required to reregister and pay another examination fee. Your failure to take the examination will be reflected in your registration as an incident report which will be viewable by your BON/RB.

Pearson VUE will not be held responsible for expenses incurred beyond the cost of the exam, including but not limited to travel expenses and lost wages on the day of the exam.

DOMESTIC SCHEDULING

Domestic examination appointments can be scheduled through the NCLEX Candidate website or by calling Pearson VUE NCLEX Candidate Services at one of the telephone numbers listed on Page 1 of this bulletin.

- If you are using the **NCLEX Candidate website** to schedule, you will be asked to supply your user ID and password, which is provided when you create an account with Pearson VUE. You also will be asked your preference for date and time of testing at the test center of your choice.
- If you schedule via the **telephone**, you will be asked to supply your name and your ATT number, along with other information to verify your identity. You also will be asked your preference for date and time of testing at the test center of your choice.
- If your first-choice date or time is unavailable, you will be offered an alternative as close to your first choice as possible.
- A **Confirmation of Appointment** email will be sent to you from Pearson VUE which will contain the date, time and location of your appointment along with directions to the test center. Verify that all the information is correct, including that your first and last names match exactly the first and last names on the identification you plan to present on exam day. Call or go online to check that your appointment has been scheduled or rescheduled if you do not receive a confirmation. Contact Pearson VUE NCLEX Candidate Services immediately at one of the numbers listed on page 1 of this candidate bulletin to correct any errors to your appointment.

Definitions of Domestic and International Test Centers are listed on page 6.

INTERNATIONAL SCHEDULING

If you choose to schedule your examination at an international test center, you will be charged an additional, non-refundable scheduling fee. If applicable, a Value Added Tax (VAT) may also be charged for this examination.

Please be aware that once you have an appointment at an international test center, if you decide to reschedule to a domestic test center, you will not receive a refund for the scheduling fee.

Please also be aware that the list of available international test centers is subject to change without prior notice. You will be notified in the event that the test center at which you are scheduled to take your examination becomes unavailable. You may reschedule the examination at another available test center. If, under these circumstances, you choose to reschedule the examination at a domestic test center, your international scheduling fee will be refunded.

Definitions of domestic and international test centers are listed below.

DEFINITIONS OF DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL TEST CENTERS

Test Center Type	Candidates Seeking U.S. Licensure	Candidates Seeking Canadian Licensure/ Registration
Domestic	United States and Territories including American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands and the U.S. Virgin Islands	Canadian Provinces/Territories and the mainland United States
International	Test centers outside of the United States and Territories listed above	Test Centers outside of Canadian Provinces/ Territories and the mainland United States

CHANGING YOUR APPOINTMENT

If you need to change your appointment date, time or location, you may go to the NCLEX Candidate website (**www.pearsonvue.com/nclex**) or call Pearson VUE NCLEX Candidate Services **one full business day (24 hours) before the scheduled exam date and time** as described below:

For examinations scheduled on **Tuesday**, **Wednesday**, **Thursday** or **Friday**, call or go online at least 24 hours prior to the day and time of your appointment, local standard time.

For examinations scheduled on **Saturday**, **Sunday** or **Monday**, call or go online no later than Friday at least 24 hours in advance of your appointment time, local standard time.

National holidays should also be considered when rescheduling an appointment, as offices may be closed.

Candidates who have appointments at an international test center may reschedule to another international test center without forfeiting their international scheduling fee. If you choose to reschedule your examination to a domestic test center, you will forfeit your international scheduling fee.

If you have an appointment at one of the domestic test centers and choose to reschedule to an international test center, you will be charged a non-refundable international scheduling fee and any applicable Value Added Tax (VAT).

If you are a candidate receiving testing accommodations, ask for the NCLEX Accommodations Coordinator in order to change your appointment.

Leaving a message on an answering machine does not constitute giving the required notice for rescheduling or unscheduling your exam appointment. You must either reschedule or unschedule your appointment on the NCLEX Candidate website or by speaking with an agent at Pearson VUE NCLEX Candidate Services and receive a confirmation of unscheduled/rescheduled appointment email.

PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Because of the importance of the NCLEX, several security measures will be enforced during the administration of the examination. Strict candidate identification requirements have been established.

When you arrive at the test center, you will be required to present one form of acceptable identification. Your identification must match exactly the first and last names you provided when registering. If your acceptable ID does not match exactly the first and last names you registered with you will be turned away and required to reregister and pay another examination fee. If you paid the additional international scheduling fee, that will be forfeited as well.

Acceptable Forms Of Identification

All forms of identification must be valid and meet the following requirements. If the ID does not meet these requirements, you will be turned away and required to reregister and pay another examination fee:

- Government-issued
- Non-expired
- Name (in Roman characters)
- Recent photograph
- Signature

Examples of acceptable forms of identification for domestic test centers are:

- Passport books and cards
- Driver's license
- Provincial/Territorial or state identification card
- Permanent residence card
- Military identification card

The **only** identifications acceptable for international test centers are:

- Passport books and cards

If your ID does not contain a signature but meets all other ID requirements listed above you must bring in a secondary form of identification to the test center. The signature on your secondary ID must match exactly with the first and last name on your primary ID and with the names that you provided when you registered. The secondary identification must contain:

- Signature (in Roman characters)

IDENTIFICATION FROM A U.S. SANCTIONED (EMBARGOED) COUNTRY

Due to U.S. trade restrictions, candidates who indicate that they live **in a sanctioned country** are unable to be admitted to sit for the NCLEX. This is a federal requirement by The Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) of the U.S. Department of Treasury. For a list of countries on the U.S. economic and trade sanctions list visit **www.ncsbn.org/1221.htm**.

In order to be admitted to the NCLEX, candidates who hold a passport from a sanctioned country must also present proof of residency (government issued identification) from a non-sanctioned country. This only applies to candidates presenting a passport from a sanctioned country.

Please visit **www.ncsbn.org/1221.htm** for the most up-to-date information on the U.S. Sanctioned Countries Identification Policy.

YOUR NAME

The first and last names printed on your identification must match **exactly** the first and last names you registered with. If the names with which you have registered are different from the names on your identification, you must bring legal name change documentation with you to the test center on the day of your test. The only acceptable forms of legal documentation are: a marriage license, divorce decree and/or a court action legal name change document. All documents must contain the name change in Roman characters and must be the **original** documents. Candidates wishing to make a name change, address change or email address change must contact their board of nursing/regulatory body. This cannot be done at the test center. If the name on your identification does not match the name you registered with, you will be turned away and will have to reregister and pay another examination fee.

NCLEX EXAMINATION CANDIDATE RULES

To ensure that all candidates' NCLEX results are earned under comparable conditions and represent fair and accurate measurement, it is necessary to maintain a standardized testing environment. The following regulations are designed to help ensure such an environment.

Below you will find the NCLEX Examination Candidate Rules. You will provide a digital signature agreeing to the full list of candidate rules that are current at the time of testing. Please note that if you do not follow the rules or the instructions of the test administrator (TA), your examination result may be withheld or cancelled, your examination fee may not be refunded and NCSBN and your board of nursing/regulatory body (BON/RB) may take other action, up to and including license/registration revocation and criminal prosecution.

Personal Items

- All personal items must be placed in provided, lockable storage
- Test centers are not responsible for lost, stolen or misplaced items

The following items may not be accessed at all during your examination appointment **(including breaks and until you leave the test center at the conclusion of your exam)**:

- Any educational, test preparation or study materials
- Cell/mobile/smart phones, tablets, smart watches, MP3 players, fitness bands, jump drives, cameras or other electronic devices and weapons of any kind

At check-in, you are required to store your electronic devices (cell/mobile/smart phones, tablets, smart watches, or other electronic devices) in a sealable, plastic bag provided by Pearson VUE. If you refuse to store your electronic devices in the bag, you will not be allowed to test. You will also be required to reregister and pay another examination fee for any additional NCLEX appointments.

After the exam, you must return your unopened, Pearson VUE bag to the Administration desk to be opened and examined by the TA. Any tampering with the bag before check-out could result in an incident report.

The following items are **not allowed in the testing room**, but may be accessed while on break (unless otherwise instructed):

- Bags/purses/wallets/non-smart watches
- Coats/hats/scarves/gloves
- Medical aids/devices
- Food or drink, gum/candy
- Lip balm

For any questions regarding what you can and cannot access outside the testing room, ask the TA.

Confidentiality

- You may not disclose or discuss with anyone, including instructors, information about the items or answers seen in your examination (this includes posting or discussing questions on the Internet and social media websites).
- You may not reconstruct exam items using your memory of your exam or the memory of others.
- You may not seek help from any other party in answering items (in person, by phone, text or by email) during your examination (including breaks).
- You may not remove examination items and/or responses (in any format) or notes about the examination from the testing room.
- You may not copy or reconstruct exam items during or following your exam for any reason.

Test Administration

- You may not take the examination for somebody else.
- You may not tamper with the computer or use it for any function other than taking the examination.
- You may not engage in disruptive behavior at any time while in the test center.
- The TA will provide you with an erasable note board and marker before you enter the testing room.
- A clean note board can be requested during your examination by **raising your hand**. The erasable note board and marker may not be removed from the testing room during the examination except by the TA, and these items must be returned to the TA after the examination.
- Writing on any materials other than the note board is prohibited and will result in an incident report and results will be placed on hold.
- If you experience hardware or software problems during the examination, notify the TA immediately by **raising your hand**.
- Earplugs are available from the TA upon request; it is not acceptable to bring your own earplugs.

Break Procedures

- You will be given the opportunity to take a 'scheduled' break after approximately two hours, and again after approximately three and a half hours of examination testing time. Instructions will appear on your computer screen at the appropriate times.
- To request a break, or to exit the testing room for any other reason, **raise your hand** for the TA and wait to be escorted out of the testing room. A palm vein scan will be taken when you leave, and again when you re-enter the testing room. The TA will resume the exam for you upon your return. The exam clock will not stop while you are on a scheduled or unscheduled break.
- Exam data is encrypted and transferred electronically to your BON/RB. Please refrain from asking the TA about exam content and/or results. If you have questions about the examination, please contact NCSBN.

GROUNDS FOR DISMISSAL OR CANCELLATION OF RESULTS

A candidate who violates the test center regulations or rules, or engages in irregular behavior, misconduct and/or does not follow the test administrator's warning to discontinue inappropriate behavior may be dismissed from the test center and his or her exam fee will not be refunded. Additionally, your exam result may be withheld or cancelled and your board of nursing/regulatory body may take other disciplinary action such as denial of a license/registration and/or disqualifying you from future registrations for licensure/registration. Behaviors that constitute irregular behavior or misconduct include but are not limited to:

- Giving or receiving assistance of any kind.
- Using, accessing, or attempting to access any prohibited aids. Prohibited aids are any devices or materials that will be helpful in taking the NCLEX. Examples of aids that are prohibited are electronic devices (e.g. cell/mobile/smart phones, tablets, smart watches, etc.), handheld calculators, conversion tables, dictionaries, etc.
- Attempting to take the examination for someone else.
- Bringing any NCLEX study aids (textbooks, notebooks, classroom notes, etc.) to the testing center or accessing or attempting to access such study materials at any time after the start of the examination administration, including break times.
- Failing to follow testing regulations or the instructions of the test administrator.
- Creating a disturbance of any kind.
- Tampering with the operation of the computer or attempting to use it for any function other than taking the examination.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Candidates should be aware and understand that the disclosure of examination items before, during, or after the examination is a violation of law. Violations of confidentiality and/or candidates' rules can result in criminal prosecution or civil liability and/or disciplinary actions by the licensing agency including the denial of licensure. If you are aware of, or have observed an attempt to compromise the NCLEX process, please report it to the NCLEX Test Security group. Candidates may report any suspicious behavior in the following ways:

Call NCSBN at 1.866.293.9600 (toll-free) or email **examssecurity@ncsbn.org**.

TEST SECURITY

NCSBN strives to report results that accurately reflect the ability of each test taker. Accordingly, our standards and procedures for administering exams have two related goals: giving test-takers comparable opportunities to demonstrate their abilities and preventing any test-takers from gaining an unfair advantage over others. To promote these objectives, NCSBN reserves the right to cancel or withhold any test results when, in its judgment, a testing irregularity occurs; there is an apparent discrepancy in, or falsification of, a test-taker's identification; a test-taker engages in misconduct, irregular behavior, violates the candidate rules or otherwise breaches his/her Confidentiality Agreement; or the results are believed to be invalid for any other reason, notwithstanding the absence of any evidence of a candidate's personal involvement in irregular activities.

INVALID RESULTS

NCSBN may cancel or withhold a candidate's results if, in NCSBN's judgment, there is a basis to question the validity of the results for any reason, notwithstanding the absence of any evidence of a candidate's personal involvement in irregular activities. Evidence of invalid results may include, but are not limited to unusual answer patterns or unusual score increases from one exam to another. If a candidate's result is cancelled or invalidated without finding that the candidate engaged in irregular behavior, the candidate may appeal the decision and/or will be offered a free retest. An appeal is the candidate's exclusive means of redress with regard to NCSBN's decision to take this action.

The staff members at each test center follow designated procedures to ensure that the operation of the test center meets NCSBN criteria for standardized testing. The following are procedures that will be adhered to when you arrive at the test center for your NCLEX appointment.

CHECK-IN PROCESS

Plan to arrive at the test center at least 30 minutes **before** your scheduled testing time. If you arrive more than 30 minutes **after** your scheduled appointment, you may be required to forfeit your NCLEX appointment. Your failure to take the examination will be reflected in your registration as an incident report which will be viewable by your board of nursing/regulatory body (BON/RB).

- You will be required to present a valid acceptable ID.
- You will be asked to provide your digital signature, a palm vein scan, and you will have your photograph taken.
- Hats, scarves and coats may not be worn in the testing room or while your photograph is being taken. You will be asked to remove any watches, large jewelry, or other accessories before entering the testing room.
- You will be required to place all electronic devices in a Pearson VUE provided sealable bag to be placed in the lockable storage provided to you for the duration of the examination appointment.
- Friends, relatives or children who accompany you to the test center are not allowed to wait in the test center while you take the examination.
- You will be required to leave your personal belongings outside the testing room. Secure storage will be provided, however, candidates are not allowed to access any of the prohibited personal items at any time during the exam, including breaks. Storage space is small, so candidates should plan appropriately. Test centers assume no responsibility for candidates' personal belongings.
- The TA will give you a short orientation and then will escort you to a computer terminal. You must remain in your seat during the examination, except when authorized to leave by test center staff. You may not change your computer terminal unless a TA directs you to do so.
- Please reference the Test Site Rules and Regulations listed on page 8 for additional information on the check-in process.

Raise your hand to notify the TA if you:

- Believe you have a problem with your computer.
- Need to change note boards.
- Need to take a break.
- Need the test administrator for any reason.
- Have completed your exam.

BREAKS

- You will have up to six hours to complete the NCLEX-RN Examination, and five hours to complete the NCLEX-PN Examination; total examination time includes a short tutorial, two pre-programmed optional breaks and any unscheduled breaks you may take.
- The first optional break is offered after two hours of testing. The second optional break is offered after three and one half hours of testing.
- The computer will automatically tell you when these scheduled breaks begin.
- You must leave the testing room during both scheduled and unscheduled breaks.
- It is strongly advised that you not leave the test center during breaks.
- When you take a break, all personal items accessed (including purses, wallets, etc.) may be inspected by the TA.
- Any tampering of the electronic device bag provided at check-in will be reported. This could result in the cancellation of your examination results.
- You will be required to provide a palm vein scan before and after your break.

Candidates are not allowed to access any of the prohibited personal items during breaks (including but not limited to those listed on page 8).

All breaks count against testing time.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

Occasionally, technical problems may require rescheduling of a candidate's examination. If circumstances arise causing you to wait more than 30 minutes after your scheduled appointment time, or a restart delay lasts longer than 30 minutes, you will be given the choices of continuing to wait or rescheduling your appointment without an additional fee.

- If you choose to wait, you may change your mind at any time **prior** to beginning or restarting the examination.
- If you choose not to reschedule, but rather test after a delay, you will have no further recourse and your exam results will be considered valid.
- If you choose to reschedule your appointment or the problem causing the delay cannot be resolved, you will be allowed to test at a later date, at no additional charge. Every attempt will be made to contact candidates if technical problems are identified prior to a scheduled appointment.

TESTING ENVIRONMENT

Testing centers administer many types of examinations including some that require essay-type responses. Test centers have no control over noises made by candidates typing during another examination. Typing noise is considered a normal part of the computerized testing environment, just as the noise of turning pages is a normal part of the paper-and-pencil testing environment. Earplugs are available from the TA upon request. You may not bring your own earplugs.

WHEN THE EXAM IS FINISHED

After your examination is finished, you will be asked to complete a brief computer-delivered questionnaire about your testing experience. When you have finished the questionnaire, **raise your hand to summon the TA**. The TA will collect and inventory your note board.

If you have electronic devices in a Pearson VUE provided bag, you must take the bag to the TA to be inspected and opened. Removal of devices by the candidate will result in an incident report and could lead to the cancellation of your examination result.

The TA will dismiss you when all requirements are fulfilled.

If you believe there was an irregularity in the administration of your exam or the associated test conditions that you believe adversely affected the outcome of your examination, you should notify the proctor or TA before you leave the test center.

RESULTS REPORTING

For quality control purposes, every NCLEX is scored twice; once by the computer at the test center and then the result is verified after the examination record has been transmitted to Pearson VUE. Although the examination is scored as the candidate completes each item, **no results** are released at the test center. In fact, test center staff do not have access to the examination results.

Examination results are available **only** from the boards of nursing/regulatory bodies (BONs/RBs) and will be sent to candidates up to six weeks after taking the examination (this time period varies across BONs/RBs). **Do not call** Pearson VUE NCLEX Candidate Services, the test center or NCSBN for examination results. If more than six weeks have passed and you have not received your results, contact your BON/RB.

You can also get your "unofficial" results after 48 business hours through the quick results service available on the NCLEX Candidate website at **www.pearsonvue.com/nclex**. **Quick results are not available in all states and there is a minimal fee for this service. The Quick Results service is not available for candidates seeking licensure/registration in Canada.**

CANDIDATE PERFORMANCE REPORT

When a candidate fails, the board of nursing/regulatory body (BON/RB) sends the candidate a Candidate Performance Report (CPR). This report identifies the performance as failing, provides the number of items administered to the candidate, and a summary of the candidate's relative strengths and weaknesses based on the test plan. This CPR is intended for failing candidates to use to help guide their study before retaking the examination.

RETAKE POLICY

The NCSBN retake policy allows candidates to retake their exam 45 days after administration of the exam. Candidates who have applied for licensure/registration with a participating BON/RB will be permitted to take the NCLEX eight times a year, but no more than once in any 45-day period. This is unless the desired jurisdiction of licensure/registration only offers a limited amount of NCLEX exams per year. Candidates are encouraged to contact the BON/RB for their policy on NCLEX retakes.

SUBMITTING COMMENTS AND FURTHER QUESTIONS

You may ask the TA for a Confidential Comment Sheet to provide any information about your exam appointment to NCSBN, the test centers or Pearson VUE NCLEX Candidate Services.

If you have questions about your testing session, please contact NCSBN within two weeks of your exam appointment.

NCLEX CONTENT, TEST DEVELOPMENT AND TEST PLANS

EXAM CONTENT

The practice of nursing requires knowledge of the health needs of clients as well as an understanding of integrated processes fundamental to nursing practice. Client Needs are used as the framework for both RN and PN test plans. NCLEX-RN and NCLEX-PN examinations may include items written at various cognitive levels.[1,2] The majority of items are written at the application or higher levels of cognitive ability. In general, if the age or age category of the client is not stated in an item, it can be understood that the client is an adult.

[1] Bloom, B.S. (ed). (1956). *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification ofEducational Goals, Handbook 1. Cognitive Domain.* New York: David McKay Co, Inc.

[2] Anderson, L.W., Krathwohl, D.R. (eds).(2001). *A taxonomy for learning, teaching and assessing. A revision of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives.* New York: AddisonWesley Longman, Inc.

DEVELOPING THE NCLEX

The NCLEX is developed using the following steps:

1. To determine the basis for safe and effective entry-level nursing practice, NCSBN conducts a practice analysis of entry-level nurses every three years. The legal scope of nursing practice and results of the practice analysis are used to develop an NCLEX test plan. During alternate years, NCSBN conducts the Continuous Practice Analysis to validate the existing NCLEX Test Plan. If significant changes in entry-level practice are noted, the findings are forwarded to the NCSBN Board of Directors for further direction. Test plans, which outline the content categories and percentage of exam items allocated to the categories, reflect the job-related knowledge, skills and abilities required for safe and effective entry-level job performance.
2. Item writers are practicing nurses who write items that test entry-level nursing practice for the RN or PN examination.
3. A second expert panel of practicing nurses then reviews the newly-written items. The second review is to ensure that each item reflects current entry-level nursing practice and that it is accurate.
4. All items used in an examination have been pretested and are shown to have met NCSBN statistical criteria before being used as operational (scored) items.

DEFINITIONS

Client = Individual, family or group which includes significant others and population.

NCLEX Integrated Processes = Themes such as the nursing process, caring, communication, documentation, teaching, and learning are fundamental to the practice of nursing and are integrated throughout the Client Needs categories and subcategories.

Prescription = Orders, interventions, remedies or treatments ordered or directed by an authorized health care provider.

Exhibit = Denotes a client chart or medical record type of item.
Additional information is available behind tabs listed on the screen. Click on a tab to review the additional information.

Primary Health Care Provider = Member of the healthcare team (usually a medical physician [or other specialty, e.g. surgeon, nephrologist, etc.], nurse practitioner, etc.), licensed and authorized to formulate prescriptions on behalf of the client.

NCLEX TEST PLANS AND DETAILED TEST PLANS

The NCLEX-RN and the NCLEX-PN Test Plans are documents that describe the scope and content of the examinations. The NCLEX Test Plans and Detailed Test Plans can be downloaded at no cost on the NCSBN website at: **www.ncsbn.org/1287.htm**.

CLIENT NEEDS CATEGORIES COVERED ON THE NCLEX

Four major "Client Needs" categories organize the content of the *2016 NCLEX-RN® Test Plan* and the *2017 NCLEX-PN® Test Plan*.

In the *2016 NCLEX-RN* and the *2017 NCLEX-PN Test Plans*, two of the categories are divided into a total of six subcategories. "Health Promotion and Maintenance" and "Psychosocial Integrity" do not have subcategories. The following processes are integrated into all "Client Needs" categories of the *RN and PN Test Plans:* Nursing Process, Caring, Communication and Documentation, and Teaching and Learning.

For the *2016 NCLEX-RN Test Plan* (effective April 2016)

NCLEX-RN Client Needs	Percentage of Items from each Category/Subcategory
Safe and Effective Care Environment	
• Management of Care	17-23%
• Safety and Infection Control	9-15%
Health Promotion and Maintenance	6-12%
Psychosocial Integrity	6-12%
Physiological Integrity	
• Basic Care and Comfort	6-12%
• Pharmacological and Parenteral Therapies	12-18%
• Reduction of Risk Potential	9-15%
• Physiological Adaptation	11-17%

For the *2017 NCLEX-PN Test Plan* (effective April 2017)

NCLEX-PN Client Needs	Percentage of Items from each Category/ Subcategory
Safe and Effective Care Environment	
• Coordinated Care	18-24%
• Safety and Infection Control	10-16%
Health Promotion and Maintenance	6-12%
Psychosocial Integrity	9-15%
Physiological Integrity	
• Basic Care and Comfort	7-13%
• Pharmacological Therapies	10-16%
• Reduction of Risk Potential	9-15%
• Physiological Adaptation	7-13%

NCLEX PSYCHOMETRICS

COMPUTERIZED ADAPTIVE TESTING (CAT)

The NCLEX is different than a traditional pencil-and-paper examination. Typically, pencil-and-paper examinations administer the same items to every candidate, thus ensuring that the difficulty of the examination is the same across the board. Because the difficulty of the examination is constant, the percentage correct is the indicator of the candidate's ability. One disadvantage of this approach is that it is inefficient. It requires the high ability candidates to answer all the easy items on the examination, which provides very little information about their ability. Another disadvantage is that guessing can artificially inflate the scores of low ability candidates, because they can answer these items correctly 25 percent of the time for reasons that have nothing to do with their ability. Instead, the NCLEX uses Computerized Adaptive Testing (CAT) to administer the items. CAT is able to produce exam results that are more stable using fewer items by targeting items to the candidate's ability. The computer's goal during the NCLEX is to determine the ability of the candidate in relation to the passing standard. Every time the candidate answers an item, the computer re-estimates the candidate's ability. With each additional answered item, the ability estimate becomes more precise.

Each item that the candidate receives is selected from a large pool of items using three criteria:

1. The item is limited to the content area that will produce the best match to the test plan percentages. It is ensured that each candidate's exam has enough questions from each content area to match the required test plan percentages.
2. An item is selected that the candidate is expected to find challenging. Based on the candidate's answers up to that point and the difficulty of those items, the computer estimates the candidate's ability and selects an item that the candidate should have a 50% chance of answering correctly. This way, the next item should not be too easy or too hard and the examination can get maximum information about the candidate's ability from the item.
3. Excludes any item that a repeat candidate has seen in the last year.

PRETEST ITEMS

For CAT to work, the difficulty of each item must be known in advance. The degree of difficulty is determined by administering the items as pretest items to a large sample of NCLEX candidates. Because the difficulty of these pretest items is not known in advance, these items are not included when estimating the candidate's ability or making pass-fail decisions. When enough responses are collected, the pretest items are statistically analyzed and calibrated. If the pretest items meet the NCLEX statistical standards, they can be administered in future examinations as scored items.

NCLEX PASS OR FAIL DECISION RULES

The decision as to whether a candidate passes or fails the NCLEX-RN and NCLEX-PN examination is governed by three different scenarios:

Scenario # 1: The 95% Confidence Interval Rule

This scenario is the most common for NCLEX candidates. The computer will stop administering items when it is 95% certain that the candidate's ability is either clearly above or clearly below the passing standard.

Scenario #2: Maximum-Length Exam

Some candidate's ability levels will be very close to the passing standard. When this is the case, the computer continues to administer questions until the maximum number of items is reached. At this point, the computer disregards the 95% confidence rule and considers only the final ability estimate:

- If the final ability estimate is above the passing standard, the candidate passes.
- If the final ability estimate is at or below the passing standard, the candidate fails.

Scenario #3: Run-Out-of-Time Rule (R.O.O.T.)

If a candidate runs out of time before reaching the maximum number of items and the computer has not determined with 95% certainty whether the candidate has passed or failed, an alternate criteria is used.

- If the candidate has not answered the minimum number of required items, the candidate automatically fails.
- If at least the minimum number of required items were answered, the computer looks at the last 60 ability estimates:
  - If the last 60 ability estimates were consistently above the passing standard, the candidate passes.
  - If the candidate's ability estimate drops below the passing standard even once over the last 60 items, the candidate fails.

This does not mean that the candidate must answer the last 60 items correctly. Each ability estimate is based upon all previous items answered.

ALTERNATE ITEM FORMATS

Candidates may be administered multiple-choice items as well as items written in alternate formats. These formats may include, but are not limited to: multiple response, fill-in-the-blank calculation, ordered response, and/or hot spots. All item types may include multimedia such as charts, tables, graphics, sound and video.

The short tutorial at the beginning of the examination will explain how to answer each of the alternate types of items. An online version of this tutorial can be found at **www.pearsonvue.com/nclex**.

THE PASSING STANDARD

The NCLEX-RN and NCLEX-PN are separate examinations that reflect different scopes of practice. Accordingly, these examinations are scored on separate scales and have separate passing standards. The NCSBN Board of Directors reevaluates these standards once every three years. The criterion that the Board of Directors uses to set the standard is the minimum level of ability required for safe and effective entry-level nursing practice.

To assist the Board of Directors in making this decision, the Board is provided with information on: (1) the results of a standard setting exercise performed by a panel of experts with the assistance of professional psychometricians; (2) the historical record of the passing standard with summaries of the candidate performance associated with those standards; (3) the results of a standard setting survey sent to educators and employers; and (4) information describing the educational readiness of high school graduates who express an interest in nursing.

Once the passing standard is set, it is imposed uniformly on every exam record according to the procedures laid above. To pass the NCLEX, a candidate must perform above the passing standard. There is no fixed percentage of candidates that pass or fail each examination.

SIMILAR ITEMS

Occasionally, a candidate may receive an item that seems to be very similar to an item they received earlier in the examination. This could happen for a variety of reasons. For example, several items could be about similar symptoms, diseases, or disorders, yet address different phases of the nursing process. Alternatively, a pretest (unscored) item could be about content similar to an operational (scored) item. It is **incorrect** to assume that a second item, which is similar in content to a previously administered item, is administered because you answered the first item incorrectly. Always select the answer you believe to be correct for each item administered. All examinations conform to their respective test plan (NCLEX-RN or NCLEX-PN).

GUESSING

Rapid guessing can drastically lower your score. Some test preparation companies have realized that on certain paper-and-pencil tests, unanswered items are marked as wrong. To improve the candidate's score when they are running out of time, these companies sometimes advocate rapid guessing (perhaps without even reading the item) in the hope that the candidate will get at least a few items correct. On any adaptive test, this can be disastrous. It has the effect of giving the candidate easier items, which they also get wrong. The best advice is to: (1) maintain a reasonable pace (spending no more than one to two minutes on each item), and (2) carefully read and consider each item before answering.

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