



## CA RN LICENSURE QUALIFICATIONS FOR GRADUATES OF INTERNATIONAL NURSING PROGRAM

### **Background:**

The BRN receives applications from persons seeking RN licensure per BPC 2736(b) who have completed their nursing education in a nursing program located in countries other than the United States. Due to not meeting required or equivalent curriculum, per CCR 1426, applicants may be found not eligible for RN licensure.

This guideline provides information for graduates of international nursing programs seeking California RN licensure and addresses questions related to the most common applicant situations. There may be specific situations where other laws and rules may apply and requires individual consultation by Licensing staff.

### **RN Licensure Eligibility and Relevant Laws and Regulations:**

#### **RN Pre-licensure Nursing Education and Licensure Requirements**

##### **BPC 2736(b)**

An applicant who has received his or her training from a school of nursing in a country outside the United States and who has complied with the provisions of subdivision(a), or has completed training equivalent to that required by subdivision (a), shall qualify for licensure by successfully passing the examination prescribed by the board.

*2736(a) An applicant for licensure as a registered nurse shall comply with each of the following:*

- (1) Have completed such general preliminary education requirements as shall be determined by the board.*
- (2) Have successfully completed the courses of instruction prescribed by the board for licensure, in a program in this state accredited by the board for training registered nurses, or have successfully completed courses of instruction in a school of nursing outside of this state which, in the opinion of the board at the time the application is filed with the Board of Registered Nursing, are equivalent to the minimum requirements of the board for licensure established for an accredited program in this state.*
- (3) Not be subject to denial of licensure under Section 480.*

##### **CCR 1410 Application**

(a) An application for a license as a registered nurse by examination shall be submitted on an application form provided by the Board, and filed with the Board at its office in Sacramento. An application shall be accompanied by the fee and such evidence, statements or documents as therein required including evidence of eligibility to take the examination. The applicant shall submit an additional application and fee for the examination to the Board or to its examination contractor, as directed by the Board. The Board shall provide the contractor's application to the applicant.

***No license shall be issued without a complete transcript on file indicating successful completion of the courses prescribed by the Board for licensure or documentation deemed equivalent by the Board.***

### CCR 1413 English Comprehension

When the Board has reasonable doubt of an applicant's ability to comprehend the English language to a degree sufficient to permit him to discharge his duties as a Professional Nurse in this State with safety to the public, the Board shall require him to pass an examination to demonstrate such ability.

### CCR 1426 Required Curriculum

This section requires the following to be included in the curriculum:

- A. Prelicensure content: not less than **58 semester** units (87 quarter units)
  - Nursing: Theory – **18 semester** units (27 quarter units)  
Clinical – **18 semester** units (27 quarter units)
  - Communications: Oral, Written, and Group **6 semester units** (9 quarter units)
  - Behavioral and Natural Sciences: **16 semester units** (24 quarter units). Usual courses include: Anatomy with lab, Physiology with lab, Microbiology with lab, and behavioral and social science courses, such as sociology, psychology, cultural diversity.
- B. Courses include five content areas: **Medical-Surgical, Obstetrics, Pediatrics, Geriatrics, Psychiatric-Mental Health** [CCR 1424(d)].
  - Theory instruction and clinical practice for each of the content areas (Medical-Surgical, Obstetrics, Pediatrics, Geriatrics and Psychiatric-Mental Health) must be completed **concurrently**, i.e., both classroom and clinical experience must occur during the same instructional period.
  - Instructional outcomes will focus on delivering safe, therapeutic, effective, patient-centered care; practicing evidence-based practice; working as part of interdisciplinary teams; focusing on quality improvement; and using information technology. Instructional content shall include, but is not limited to, the following: critical thinking, personal hygiene, patient protection and safety, pain management, human sexuality, client abuse, cultural diversity, nutrition (including therapeutic aspects), pharmacology, patient advocacy, legal, social and ethical aspects of nursing, and nursing leadership and management.
  - Content to integrate: Nursing process; Basic intervention skills, Human development (birth to aged); Communication and interpersonal skills; Cultural patterns and diversity issues; Health and Illness concepts [CCR 1426(e)].
- C. Hours of instruction: Minimum hours for nursing curriculum [CCR 1426(g)]:  
The course of instruction shall be presented in semester or quarter units or the equivalent under the following formula:
  1. One (1) hour of instruction in theory each week throughout a semester or quarter equals one (1) unit.
  2. Three (3) hours of clinical practice each week throughout a semester or quarter equals one (1) unit.
    - Nursing Theory (For example 18 semester units – 16 wk semester) = 288 hrs.
    - Nursing Clinical (For example 18 semester units – 16 wk semester) = 864 hrs.

## Required for RN licensure application:

1. **Application for Licensure by Examination** form and all required documentations per instruction - Refer to <http://www.rn.ca.gov/applicants/lic-exam.shtml>
  - a. **Fingerprint Clearance**
  - b. **Social Security Number and Tax Information: Required**
    - Disclosure of your social security number is mandatory. Section 30 of the Business and Professions Code and Public Law 94-455 (42 USCA 405 (c)(2)(C)) authorize collection of your social security number. Your social security number will be used exclusively for tax enforcement purposes, for purposes of compliance with any judgment or order for family support in accordance with Section 11350.6 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, or for verification of licensure or examination status by a licensing or examination entity which utilizes a national examination where licensure is reciprocal with the requesting state.
    - Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) is accepted in place of SSN effective April 1, 2015.
  - c. **Official Transcript from the graduating nursing school is required**
    - Transcripts must be in English and in original language. If transcript is received from the school only in a foreign language, it will require an English translation by a certified translator or translation service. (See Translation of International Academic Credentials instructions.)
    - Completed **Breakdown of Educational Program for International Nursing Programs** form and the **Request for Transcript** form by the nursing school.  
**Note: Commission of Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS)**  
Passing the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS) examination is not required to be licensed in California. However, the Board will accept official copies of your nursing transcripts (including the clinical portion of your training) from this organization. A written request may be made to CGFNS by contacting them at (215) 222-8454 or 3600 Market Street, Suite 400, Philadelphia, PA 91904-2651. [www.cgfns.org](http://www.cgfns.org)
  - d. **Copy of RN license or diploma from the country where you were educated**, if applicable, that allows you to practice professional nursing in that country. Provide copies of additional professional certificates, if applicable.

## 2. **CCR 1413: English comprehension requirement**

When the Board has reasonable doubt of an applicant's ability to comprehend the English language to a degree sufficient to permit him to discharge his duties as a Professional Nurse in this State with safety to the public, the Board shall require him to pass an examination to demonstrate such ability.

In many cases, the Board may require additional information from the school in order to clarify course content and/or curriculum requirements. We may also request clarification for the amount of theory and clinical training completed. Additional processing time is needed for the evaluation of a curriculum from a nursing school in an International country. Non-responsiveness of the International nursing school to the Board's request adds time to application evaluation. The Board may request that the applicant submit the school curriculum, catalog, and course materials to establish that the applicant meets CCR 1426 requirements.

### **Upon completion of application review:**

1. Applicant will receive a letter of eligibility, a letter of deficiency or a letter of non-eligibility.
2. When an applicant is determined to be eligible, the applicant will register to take the NCLEX-RN Exam following the instructions on the letter of eligibility. An application is deemed abandoned if the applicant does not register for the examination within a two-year period from the date of the written notice of eligibility to take the exam [CCR1410.4(a)]
3. When an applicant is found deficient, a letter identifying specific areas of deficiencies is provided to the applicant. The applicant must correct the deficiencies and meet the requirements before the application period expires. An application is considered abandoned if the applicant does not submit evidence that shows specified deficiencies were removed within a three-year period from the date of the written deficiency letter [CCR1410.4(b)].

### **BRN Recommendations:**

1. Submit licensure application to the Board, ensuring completeness of your application and required documentation.
2. Keep a timeline and remember that the processing time for the Board to review your transcript may be longer. All transcripts must be sent directly from the school of nursing, as an official transcript from the institution. To expedite this review process, ensure that all foreign language transcripts are translated into English.
3. If you are found to be deficient in any content area, there are steps that can be completed to remove these deficiencies.

### **How to Correct Deficiencies:**

1. Contact a California Board-approved nursing program in your area for assistance. (<http://www.rn.ca.gov/education/rnprograms.shtml>). Speak with the Director of the nursing program to ask if the school has room for you to take the course(s) identified as deficient. It is usually easier to make up a specialty course, such as Obstetrics, Pediatrics, Geriatrics, or Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing. You may be required to take multiple courses if the deficiency is in an area of Medical-Surgical Nursing, as the missing content may be covered over several classes, semesters, or quarters.
2. Each school follows policies and procedures for handling applicants who are working on correcting deficiencies that have been identified by the Board. Board-approved nursing schools are not required to admit those applicants trying to correct these deficiencies.
3. Register and complete the required theory and clinical course(s).
4. Submit the documentation of completion of deficiencies, such as a transcript from the California Board-approved pre-licensure nursing program, and resume the application process.