

TERMS OF REFERENCE

ITEM WRITING GROUPS FOR THE CANADIAN PRACTICAL NURSE REGISTRATION EXAMINATION (CPNRE®)

Yardstick Assessment Strategies, Inc. (YAS) operates on the principle that content expertise for examinations is provided by user jurisdictions through the work of various committees and working groups, such as item writing. In this way, user jurisdictions play a major role in the development of the CPNRE®. Item writers are selected based on several criteria including having knowledge of current practice for beginning practitioners. All item writers are provided with an orientation on developing test questions.

1. MANDATE

- a) To develop items based on the CPNRE® Blueprint and guidelines for writing items.
- b) To develop for each item rationales for the correct and incorrect options by following the guidelines for writing rationales.

2. PARTICIPANTS

2.1. Group Composition

Item writers are selected by YAS from its bank of item writers who have been nominated by user jurisdictions.

Each item writing group has a minimum of four participants and in most cases, these participants represent different jurisdictions and different areas of nursing expertise.

2.2. Criteria Used to Appoint Item Writers

The item writer must:

- be currently registered/licensed;
- willing to sign a security agreement (see Appendix A);
- possess some nursing expertise beyond the basic level, acquired either through education preparation or clinical experience, appropriate to the examinee population for which items are being prepared;
- have knowledge of current practice for practical nurses beginning to practice;
- be able to think conceptually and to operationalize competencies into items;
- view nursing and the nursing process in broad, general terms;
- possess flexibility in using different approaches to solving problems;
- think critically and creatively, and express ideas effectively both orally and in writing;

- be able to accept criticism of one's ideas and written materials and use this criticism effectively;
- be able to work well in a group;
- be able to work intensively on a project;
- possess, if at all possible, basic computer literacy (e.g., Microsoft Word®).

2.3. Exclusion Criteria

Individuals involved in the following activities are not eligible for membership:

- Developing /teaching PN exam review/preparation courses not offered by an approved educational institution or regulatory authority;
- Publishing/contributing to exam review/preparation textbooks; and
- Participating in administration of the CPNRE®.

Note: Nursing faculty members are eligible to participate if they have no conflict of interest and have signed a security agreement (see Appendix A) prior to their involvement.

3. **TERM OF OFFICE**

An item writer usually attends only one session per year, but may be asked to attend more than one at the discretion of YAS. The nominations for item writers are valid for a period of one year.

4. **MEETINGS**

Item writing groups meet for a period of five days, as required, throughout the year.

5. **FUNCTIONS OF ITEM WRITERS**

The item writer must:

- follow the technical specifications provided in the Blueprint;
- create items to fulfill specific competencies for beginning practitioners;
- follow YAS guidelines for writing items and rationales for these items;
- evaluate the item writing session.

6. FUNCTIONS OF YARDSTICK ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

YAS staff shall:

- orient participants to and facilitate the process of writing items and rationales;
- interpret the reference documents used by item writers such as the list of competencies, the technical specifications, the item-writing kit, the reference books, etc.;
- describe and clarify the overall intent of the Blueprint;
- direct the discussion when participants critique the items and rationales;
- provide psychometric expertise throughout the session.

7. COMPENSATION

- Allowable expenses will be reimbursed based on YAS's Travel and Expenses Guidelines. This includes, but is not limited to, transportation, meals and incidentals.
- Honoraria, if applicable, are the responsibility of the regulatory authority. Please contact your regulatory authority for more information.

Appendix A: Security Agreement

To be signed by all persons involved in the examination development and/or administration.

It is understood and agreed that in consideration for the right to participate in the examination development and/or administration, the undersigned person agrees to the following security agreement:

Test questions are highly confidential and proprietary. Unauthorized production, reproduction, or publication of the test questions, in part or in whole, is prohibited by copyright laws. All persons involved in the examination development and/or administration are therefore prohibited from disclosing the content of the test questions and must not, under any circumstances, share any of the information with any person, except as authorized by Yardstick Assessment Strategies. Further, all materials handed out or produced must be returned to Yardstick Assessment Strategies. All persons involved in the examination development and/or administration must keep documents related to this exam administration or development session secure at all times. All persons must ensure that no unauthorized individuals have access to usernames, passwords, or the item writing and review website.

In addition, if you currently have a conflict of interest you must describe this conflict in this document and notify us and we will determine whether alternate arrangements should be made. After working with us, you should continue to avoid entering into a conflict or potential conflict of interest, however, should an unavoidable conflict arise you must also notify us to seek our guidance. A conflict of interest is any situation where an individual's private or professional interests may be incompatible or in conflict, or perceived to be incompatible or in conflict, with the duties and responsibilities as a person involved in the exam development or administration. A conflict of interest exists regardless of whether the individual is actually swayed by the competing interest. For example, if you are involved in the conduct of test preparation courses or study groups or if you personally know a candidate (i.e. a relative, friend, acquaintance, co-worker or neighbour) who will be writing the exam at the same writing centre where you will be presiding or invigilating, these are considered to be examples of conflict of interest.

Declaration

I acknowledge that I have read the above provisions and the attached Security Measures Appendix and that I do not need any further explanation on the terms of this security agreement.

I acknowledge that I do not have any conflict of interest in carrying out this activity, or if I have, I have notified Yardstick Assessment Strategies (YAS).

I understand and agree to abide to these provisions.

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

Witness: _____

Date: _____

Meeting/ Exam:

I hereby declare the following potential or perceived conflict of interest:

Security Agreement Appendix

In order to protect the sizeable capital investment in the examinations which may include advance preparation of exam materials for future years, the persons involved in the examination development and/or administration process undertake to maintain all information regarding the examinations gathered at any time, as confidential information. Without limiting the generality of this undertaking, these persons specifically agree:

- a) To hold confidential any information obtained, including oral discussions, regarding the development, administration, or content of the examination.
- b) To require any person engaged in the examination development or its administration or who have access to the contents of the examination, to hold confidential such information.
- c) To refrain from soliciting or engaging any person, including former employees or contract workers of either party or anyone in possession of confidential information, in any capacity that would cause a breach of confidentiality.
- d) To discourage at all times anyone planning to breach such confidentiality and to provide written notice to the Yardstick Assessment Strategies staff of any occasion where such a breach of confidentiality has happened or is likely to happen.

It is understood and agreed that breaches of confidentiality may include directly or indirectly disclosing the confidential information. Indirect disclosure includes but is not limited to providing courses, in-services, writing articles or giving talks based on confidential information to competitors, students, researchers, consultants or any other organization.

The word “person” in this appendix shall include any employee, volunteer, committee member, invigilator, representative, consultant, consignee, organization, contract worker, company over which the party has direct or indirect authority or control.

All examination materials and information should be considered Confidential or Secret, although they may not necessarily be identified as such.

All persons working on any phase of the development or administration of examinations are expected to honour these security measures. To confirm this, all persons will be asked to sign an agreement acknowledging that: (a) the provisions used by Yardstick Assessment Strategies to protect the security of examinations, examination materials, and related information have been provided to them in writing and/or verbally; (b) they understand these provisions; and (c) they agree to abide by them

Please direct all inquiries or conflict of interest to:

President and Chief Operating Officer
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