



**South African Nursing Council**  
*Regulating nursing, advocating for the public*

## **GUIDELINES ON PROFESSIONAL ENTRANCE EXAMINATION FOR PROFESSIONAL REGISTRATION WITH THE SOUTH AFRICAN NURSING COUNCIL**



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## DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

TERMS	DEFINITIONS
The Act	The Nursing Act, 2005 (Act No. 33 of 2005), and any expression to which a meaning has been assigned in the Act shall bear such meaning and, unless the context indicates otherwise
Academic year	A period of at least 44 weeks of learning in any calendar year
Assessment	A structured process for gathering evidence and making judgements about a learner's performance in relation to the prescribed requirements for the programme
Assessment method	The act that the assessor engages in, utilising a variety of assessment strategies
Assessor	A practitioner registered as such with the Council who will be responsible for the assessment of the learner achievement of learning outcomes for the programme
Clinical accompaniment	A structured process by a nursing education institution to facilitate assistance and support to the learner by the nurse educator at the clinical facility to ensure the achievement of the programme outcomes
Clinical facility	A continuum of services to promote health and provide care to individuals and groups, used to teach learners
Clinical learning opportunity	The range of learning experiences available in a healthcare setting or other experiential learning sites for a learner to gain the required clinical skills
Clinical placement	The period spent by a learner in clinical and other experiential learning sites to ensure that the purpose of the programme is achieved
Clinical supervision	The assistance and support extended to the learner by the professional nurse and a general nurse at a clinical facility with an aim of developing a competent, independent practitioner
Competence	The ability of a practitioner to integrate the professional attributes including, but not limited to, knowledge, skills, judgement, values, and beliefs required to perform as an auxiliary nurse in all situations and practice settings

Core	That compulsory learning required in situations contextually relevant to the qualification
Fee	A fee or fees determined by the Council from time to time and published by notice in the <i>Gazette</i>
Fundamental	The learning which forms the grounding or basis to undertake education, training, or further learning required in the obtaining of a qualification
Integrated assessment	Forms of assessment which permit the learner to demonstrate applied competence, and which use a range of formative and summative assessment methods
Learner	A person registered with the Council as a learner nurse in terms of section 32
Learning outcomes	The prescribed competencies and educational outcomes for the programme
Moderation	The process conducted by an independent moderator, which ensures that assessment of the outcomes prescribed for the programme is fair, valid, and reliable
Moderator	A practitioner registered as such with the Council who will be responsible for the moderation of assessment conducted by the nursing education institutions for the programme
Programme	A purposeful and structured set of learning experiences that leads to registration in the category auxiliary nurse
Programme outcomes	The equivalent of the exit level outcomes of the qualification
Qualification	A planned combination of learning outcomes with a defined purpose that is intended to provide qualifying learners with applied competence for meeting the prescribed requirements of the auxiliary nurse qualification that is registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)
Recognition of Prior Learning	The evidence-based assessment comparison of previous learning and experience against the learning outcomes required for a specific programme and the acceptance of such previous learning for the purpose of accessing a programme
Section	A section of the Act

## ACRONYMS

CHE:	Council on Higher Education
ELOs:	Exit Level Outcomes
NEI:	Nursing Education Institution
NQF:	National Qualification Framework
RPL:	Recognition of Prior Learning
SANC:	South African Nursing Council
WIL:	Work Integrated Learning

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The South African Nursing Council (SANC) is in terms of Section 4 (1) (c) of the Act mandated to conduct examinations and appoint Examiners and Moderators. Section 4(10) (n) of the Act stipulates that the Council must monitor the assessment by education and training providers, including the recognition of prior learning, register constituent assessors and moderators and grant diplomas and certificates in accordance with the requirements of the Act and any other law.

The SANC has commenced with implementation of the Professional Entrance Examination for professional registration with the SANC. The summative examinations that are conducted by SANC for legacy qualifications are coming to an end in November 2023. The change in the type of examination conducted by the SANC is in line with the global trends where the Professional Nursing Regulators are conducting licensure examination as a means of assessing fitness for practice of the nurses on completion of summative/final examinations that are conducted by Nursing Education Institutions (NEIs)/providers of nursing programmes. The SANC will no longer grant Diplomas but will grant Professional Registration Certificates on successful completion of the Professional Entrance Examination.

The Professional Entrance Examination is one of the last hurdles that a candidate must face in the licensing process. The SANC has the ultimate responsibility to ensure that the examination meets technical, professional, legal standards, and protects the health, safety, and welfare of the public by assessing candidates' abilities to practice competently. Once the candidate has passed a Professional Entrance Examination, the Council must be satisfied to grant the license, thus assuring the public that the licensee is qualified to practice at the time of initial licensure.

## **2. PURPOSE**

The purpose of the guidelines is to outline important information that students, Lecturers and Invigilators must be familiar with regarding the Professional Entrance Examination. The guidelines further outline the structure of the Professional Entrance Examination.

## **3. APPLICABLE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK**

- 3.1 The Nursing Act, 2005 (Nursing Act NO. 33 of 2005)
- 3.2 Regulations relating to the Approval of and the Minimum Requirements for the Education and Training of a Learner Leading to Registration in the Category Auxiliary Nurse (Government Notice No. R.169 of 8 March 2013)
- 3.3 Regulations relating to the approval of and the Minimum Requirements for the Education and Training of a Learner Leading to Registration in the Category General Nurse (Government Notice No. R.171 of 8 March 2013)
- 3.4 Regulations relating to the accreditation of Institutions as Nursing Education Institutions (Government Notice No. R.173 of 8 March 2013) and any other relevant regulations
- 3.5 Regulations relating to the Approval of and the Minimum- Requirements for the Education and Training of a Learner Leading to Registration in the Categories Professional Nurse and Midwife (Government Notice No. R.174 of 8 March 2013)
- 3.6 Regulations Regarding Fees and Fines Payable to the South African Nursing Council (Government Notice No. R.170 of 8 March 2013)
- 3.7 Revised Assessment and Moderation Policy

#### 4. GENERAL INFORMATION

- 4.1 Only candidates who have passed the Nursing Education Institution's summative/final examination (Theory and Clinical practice) will be eligible to write the Professional Entrance Examination.
- 4.2 The annual examination schedule is published on the SANC website at [www.sanc.co.za/Education and Training of a Nurse or Midwife/ South African Nursing Council examinations](http://www.sanc.co.za/Education%20and%20Training%20of%20a%20Nurse%20or%20Midwife/South%20African%20Nursing%20Council%20examinations). The schedule clearly indicates the type of examination and the date and time- when the examination is written.
- 4.3 The paper consists of four (4) compulsory questions, allocated twenty-five (25) marks for each question. One (1) question consists of twenty-five (25) multiple choice questions where each question has four (4) answer choices. The other remaining questions are comprised of short and long essay type questions. This structure is applicable irrespective of the type of the examination leading to registration in the following categories:
  - Auxiliary Nurse;
  - General Nurse;
  - Midwife; and
  - Professional Nurse and Midwife.
- 4.4 The duration of the examination is three (3) hours.
- 4.5 The pass mark is 60%.
- 4.6 The examination will be conducted at the Nursing Education Institution (NEI) where education and training was completed except where Students choose to write the examination in November, They will be responsible to download the examination application form on the SANC website; at [www.sanc.co.za](http://www.sanc.co.za) and the completed form together with proof of payment of the applicable examination fees should be emailed to [exam@sanc.co.za](mailto:exam@sanc.co.za). Part of the form must be completed and signed by the Person in charge of the NEI of the applicable venue.
- 4.7 The examination timetables will be sent to the NEIs referred to above or the individual candidate in case of foreign candidates.
- 4.8 It is the responsibility of each candidate to ensure that the information on the examination timetable is correct and should there be any incorrect information, the candidate should notify the Person in charge of the NEI before the examination is written.
- 4.8 Candidates must be present at the examination venue thirty (30) minutes before commencement of the examination.
- 4.9 Candidates may not leave the examination venue during the first thirty (30) minutes or the last fifteen (15) minutes of the examination.
- 4.10 Candidates should ensure that they know the examination Centre and how to get there prior to the examination date.
- 4.11 A candidate is given three (3) attempts to write the examination; a candidate who fails the examination for the third (3rd) time, must take a six (6) month break; the candidate will re-start the examination cycle again limitlessly.
- 4.12 **The students must hand over the examination question papers to the Invigilator on submission of the examination book.**

## 5. PROCESSING OF APPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The accurate capture of the registration details of the candidate is essential for the processing of the students' results and therefore the NEIs must ensure that the students' information is accurately captured
- 5.2 Only the official entry forms developed by SANC must be used.
- 5.3 All Foreign candidates will be expected to write the Professional Entrance Examination leading to registration in the following categories:
  - 5.3.1 Auxiliary Nursing
  - 5.3.2 General Nurse
  - 5.3.3 Midwife
- 5.4 The office verifies the availability of the covering letter and proof of payment.
- 5.5 The office sends the confirmation of the receipt of information to NEIs.
- 5.6 All enquires are dealt with within seven (7) days.
- 5.7 The SANC office dispatches timetables via the Courier a month before the sitting of the examination, namely, in April and October.

## 6. IMPORTANT ASPECTS TO NOTE IN THE EXAMINATION ROOM

- 6.1 The candidate must bring along the examination timetable, proof of identity in the form of South African ID or passport as entry to the examination venue.
- 6.2 The candidate **will not** be permitted into the examination room without valid identity.
- 6.3 The name of the candidate, training school and center must not appear anywhere on or in the examination book.
- 6.4 Only examination timetable and transparent ruler is allowed in the examination room.
- 6.5 Rough work must be done on the last page of the book but must be marked accordingly.
- 6.6 No pages of the answer book may be torn out.
- 6.7 Under no circumstances may a book be retained or removed from the examination room
- 6.8 Candidates desiring to speak to the invigilator should attract his/ her attention by standing quietly.
- 6.9 Electronic devices such as cell phone, watch, tablet, etc. are not accepted in the examination room.

## 7. THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INVIGILATOR

- 7.1 The roles and responsibilities of the Invigilators is as outlined below:



- 7.1.1 Verify the identity of all candidates and not allow a candidate without an examination timetable issued by the Registrar and Chief Executive Officer for the examination and proof of positive identity.
- 7.1.2 No candidates shall be admitted after the examination has been in progress for half an hour, nor shall any candidate be permitted to leave until the examination has been in progress for half an hour
- 7.1.3 Ensure that students do not enter the examination venue with unauthorised material e.g memoranda, notes, electronic devices e.g., cell phones, calculator
- 7.1.4 Ensure that Candidates shall be placed as far apart as possible at least 1 metre apart
- 7.1.5 No person other than the invigilator and the candidates shall be present in the examination room at any time during the examination
- 7.1.6 Parcels should be opened and checked on receipt to ascertain whether all the documents required have been received and whether sufficient answer books are available
- 7.1.7 The examination box containing the question papers, shall however be opened only in the examination room in the presence of the candidates *thirty (30)* minutes before the stipulated time for the commencement of the examination. The *examination box* shall not be opened at any other time or place
- 7.1.8 Before handing out the question papers, in respect of examinations or portions of shall:
- Read out the instructions appearing on the cover of the answer book
  - Instruct candidates to write the name of the examination, paper number (if relevant) and the date of examination on the front cover of the answer book and ensure that **candidates write the correct question paper according to the examination appearing on the attendance register and the candidate's timetable**
- 7.1.9 Invigilators shall not comment on question papers, or give any explanation, or answer any questions or permit a candidate or other person to do so. Any occurrence of this nature may result in the disqualifications of all the candidates
- 7.1.10 No question papers shall be made available during the examination to anyone except to a candidate in the possession of an examination timetable and the tutor who may scrutinise the paper to identify possible problems which may be clarified either through the invigilator or immediately with the Council's office
- 7.1.11 The stipulated time for an examination must be strictly adhered to, candidates shall, however, be allowed the full period. e.g., if an examination is scheduled to be written from 9:00 to 12:00 and due to the announcement of the rules and instruction or for any other reason, the signal to commence is given only at 09:05 then candidates shall be allowed to write until 12:05
- 7.1.12 In emergencies, invigilators should take such action as may be deemed necessary. A full report shall be written and submitted to the Registrar and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Council
- 7.1.13 This instruction must, however, not be interpreted as authorising an invigilator to allow a candidate additional time to make up time lost by reason of indisposition during the examination, or because the candidate arrived late
- 7.1.14 Each candidate shall be issued with a 12-leaf answer book (both sides of the pages are ruled). The candidates must write on both sides of the pages. If candidate needs second or further books, the same 12 leaf answer book/books should be issued as required

7.1.15 Only when satisfied that the first answer book has been fully used. Where more than one answer book is used every answer book to be numbered e.g., in the appropriate space on the cover. The second and subsequent answer book to be placed inside the first book

7.1.16 Candidates must not to tear/remove pages from answer books under any circumstances.

7.1.17 Instruct candidates to write their examination number only in the space provided on the cover of the answer book. If anything is added to the number, the candidate may be disqualified by the Council.

7.1.18 An invigilator is also not entitled to prevent a candidate from writing or continuing to write an examination in the event of an irregularity.

## 8 CANDIDATES WHO ARE REGISTERED FOR THE EXAMINATION BUT ARE UNABLE TO WRITE THE EXAMINATION

8.1 A candidate who is absent from an examination on the actual day / days the examination, for a reason acceptable to the Council, may apply for admission to the next examination without the payment of the examination fee.

8.2 The candidate must inform the Council of the reasons for the absence within twenty- one (21) days of the date of the examination from which the candidate was absent

## 9 EXAMINATION IRREGULARITIES

9.1 In the event of an irregularity whilst the candidate is writing the examination paper, the Invigilator will deal with the transgression in terms of the standard operating procedure on handling of an examination irregularity.

9.2 The following table depicts some activities which constitute an examination irregularity and how the Invigilator must deal with each transgression. NB The list is not exhaustive but merely provides examples of such examination irregularities.

Irregularity	How to deal with it
Candidate in possession of unauthorised material	The answer book is confiscated and marked book 1 irregularity
Candidate assisting or obtaining assistance from others	The time of confiscation to be reflected on the cover of the book
Examination written by another person on behalf of a registered candidate	<p>New book-marked book 2 is handed to the individual, noting the time on the cover of the book</p> <p>Candidate and Invigilator should write the Incident</p> <p>The crib notes or evidence of the irregularity is submitted by the Invigilator or the person who identified the irregularity to the Manager: Examination or the Professional Officer of the examination Section</p>

	The candidate should not be allowed to write Council examination for the period of two (2) years following the irregularity
Leakage of examinations	<p>Leakage to be immediately reported to the Registrar and CEO</p> <p>Investigation should be carried out by the Legal Department of SANC</p> <p>Examination may be nullified at the sole discretion of the SANC</p> <p>Answer books may not be marked if the examination is already written</p>

## 10 THE EXAMINATION STRUCTURE

The examination is structured into five (5) sections

### 10.1 Professional Entrance Examination for registration in the category Auxiliary Nurse

Thematic Areas of the Examination paper	Percentage (%) allocation
Professionalism (Ethical and Legal Frameworks)	15%
Delivery/ Management of Nursing care	65%
Interpersonal relationship	10%
Record keeping	5%
Health Education	5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 10.2 The Professional Entrance Examination for registration in the category General Nurse

Thematic Areas of the Examination paper	Percentage (%) allocation
Management of Nursing Care	60%
Unit Management and recording keeping	15%
Calculations of medicines and intravenous infusions	10%
Professionalism (Ethical and Legal Frameworks)	10%
Interpersonal relationships	5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 10.3 The Professional Entrance Examination for registration in the Category Professional Nurse and Midwife

#### 10.3.1 PAPER ONE (1): Comprehensive Nursing Care

Thematic Areas of the Examination paper	Percentage (%) allocation
Management of Nursing Care	50% comprehensive Nursing
Management of Health Establishment and recording keeping	25%
Management of medicines and intravenous infusions	10%
Professionalism (Ethical and Legal Frameworks)	10%
Interpersonal relationships	5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 10.3.2 PAPER TWO (2) Midwifery Component

Thematic Areas of the Examination paper	Percentage (%) allocation
Normal and High-Risk Ante- Natal Care	25%
Normal and High-Risk Intra-Partum Care	35%
Normal and High-Risk Post- Partum Care	20%
Normal and High-Risk Neonate	10%
Maternal, Child and Woman 's Health	10%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 11. PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

11.1 The office of the SANC receives computerised final assessment results according to the NEIs and individual candidates.

11.2 The assessment results are sent via Courier to the NEIs and the candidates.

11.3 Results will also be published to NEIs through emails.

11.4 Individual results will be communicated to the candidates via SMS.

11.5 The Professional Entrance Examination results are published on the SANC website only with the candidate's examination number.

## 12. REMARKING

12.1 A candidate may apply for re- marking/ re- assessment for failed assessment paper at a prescribed fee.

12.2 Only candidates who obtained a mark lesser than the pass mark of 60% may apply for remarking.

12.3 Only the candidate can initiate the remark.

12.4 The application for re- marking/ re- assessment and the prescribed fee must reach the Council within twenty- one (21) days after the publication of assessment results.

12.5 A re- marker shall be an independent person who did not mark or moderate the scripts

12.6 The re- marking period allocated to the re- marker will depend on the number of assessment scripts. A period of 5-10 working days will be permitted for re- marking of scripts final for the assessment paper.

12.7 Results of the outcome of the re- marking/ re- assessment and re- marker's report will be sent to the candidate.

12.8 The re-marker's mark/ results shall be final for the assessment paper (s).

#### **14. VIEWING OF EXAMINATION SCRIPTS**

SANC has the criteria that allows candidates who failed an assessment to have access to their assessment scripts, which are:

- 14.1 Candidates are permitted to view their examination scripts by appointment;
- 14.2 Only candidates who have applied and paid the re- marking fee, been informed of the outcome, and studied the comments of the external re- marker;
- 14.3 The deadline for re-marking is two (2) weeks after the publication of the original examination results;
- 14.4 Candidates will be responsible for paying their own travelling and subsistence costs
- 14.5 Only candidate(s) will be allowed to view own script;
- 14.6 The date and time to view the answer book should be confirmed by the SANC; and
- 14.7 Viewing shall be in line with the SANC approved procedure, namely, within two (2) weeks following the re-marking results.

## 14. REFERENCES

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