

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
NURSING CARE QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMISSION
PROCEDURE**

Title:	Approval of Student Clinical Learning Experience in Washington for Out-of-State Nursing Programs	Number:	E06.01
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Reference:	RCW 18.79.010; RCW 18.79.050; RCW 18.79.110; RCW 18.79.240; RCW 34.05; WAC 246-840-342; WAC 246-840-455; and WAC 246-840-550 to WAC 246-840-575
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Effective Date:	1/10/2013
Supersedes:	None

Approved:	<i>Suellyn Masek, MSN, RN, CNOR</i>
Chair:	Suellyn Masek, MSN, RN, CNOR

Washington State Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission

PURPOSE:

The Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission (NCQAC) has statutory authority in the state of Washington through [RCW 18.79.110](#) to approve and review nursing programs. NCQAC protects the health and safety of its citizens and ensures quality nursing educational programs. Licensed practical (LPN), registered nurse (RN) and advanced practice nursing (ARNP) students from out-of-state nursing programs must have clinical placement approval from the NCQAC. [[RCW 18.79.240](#)]

The Nursing Program Approval Panel (NPAP) has the delegated authority from the Nursing Commission to approve student clinical learning experiences in the state of Washington for out-of-state nursing programs. This procedure provides direction on the approval process for out-of-state nursing programs seeking to place nursing students in clinical sites in the state of Washington.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE OUT-OF-STATE NURSING PROGRAM:

1. A nursing education program outside of Washington's jurisdiction seeking approval to conduct clinical learning experiences in Washington shall be:
 - a. Fully approved or accredited by the state board of nursing in the state where the nursing education program originates; and

- b. Approved by the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) prior to seeking commission approval. The written request and the required supporting documentation to conduct clinical learning experiences in Washington may be submitted to NPAP at the same time that an application is submitted to WSAC, but the request to conduct clinical learning experiences in Washington cannot be approved until the program is approved by WSAC.
2. All approved out-of-state programs for clinical placements are required to submit an annual report to NPAP on the forms provided by the commission.
3. The nurse administrator responsible for licensed practical nurse (LPN) and registered nurse (RN) programs must meet the educational requirements identified in [WAC 246-840-555 \(6\)](#). Advanced registered nurse practitioner (ARNP) program directors must meet the educational qualifications identified by the national nursing accreditation body approved by the United States Department of Education (USDE).
4. Clinical faculty teaching LPN or RN students in the state of Washington must meet the requirements identified in [WAC 246-840-570\(4\) and \(5\)](#). Clinical faculty teaching ARNP students must be licensed as an ARNP and meet the requirements of [WAC 246-840-342](#). ARNP faculty must meet the requirements for educational qualifications as identified by the national nursing accreditation body.
5. Clinical preceptors may be used to enhance direct care of patients or clients in clinical learning experience after the student has received clinical and didactic instruction from program faculty. Undergraduate programs may utilize preceptors during the final semester or capstone course. Post-graduate programs may utilize preceptors after the student has received clinical and didactic instruction from program faculty in all basic areas for that course or specific learning experience.
 - A. During the precepted experience, the faculty shall confer with each preceptor and student regularly. Minimally, this communication should occur at the beginning of the student learning experience, in the middle of the experience, and at the end of the learning experience. Communication may occur more frequently as required by the clinical experience.
 - B. Programs utilizing preceptors in the state of Washington shall ensure that: preceptor is:
 - licensed at or above the level for which the student is preparing;
 - experienced in the facility and specialty area; and
 - oriented to written course and student learning objectives and documented role expectations of faculty, preceptor, and student. [[WAC 246-840-570\(3\)](#)]
6. Out-of-state nursing programs that are preparing students for ARNP practice must be accredited and maintain accreditation status by a nursing or nursing-related accrediting organization recognized by USDE or the Council of Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

7. Programs are required and must obtain approval for clinical site locations or total number of student placements. Health care providers may deny placement of students at the clinical site at any time.
8. Out-of-state nursing programs are required to notify NPAP of changes in clinical faculty teaching in Washington State.
9. Out-of: state nursing programs are required to notify NPAP of changes in nursing administrators.

PROCEDURE:

- I. The nursing education program outside Washington jurisdiction seeking approval to conduct clinical learning experiences in Washington should initiate the process with NPAP at least three months prior to the anticipated start of the clinical experience in Washington.
2. The nursing program must submit the following:
 - A. A completed Nursing Education Program Approval Application ([DOH #669-328](#)).
Note: it is not necessary to complete #6 on the application unless the program is seeking full program approval in this state. Programs seeking full approval must have a physical campus in Washington.
 - B. A letter of intent specifically identifying the courses and clinical experience(s) for which the nursing program is seeking approval;
 - C. Description of the type (e.g. direct faculty supervised, preceptorship) and the specific practice area of the proposed clinical learning experiences to be conducted in Washington, including the geographic location, names of proposed clinical facilities, and the anticipated date when the clinical learning experiences will begin. {Provide in table format, the specific clinical facilities that will be utilized, the number of the students at each clinical facility, the number and names of the program's clinical faculty at each clinical facility, and the number of preceptors that will be utilized at each clinical facility};
 - D. A statement as to how these programs and clinical experiences will prepare students for licensure as licensed practical nurses, registered nurses or advanced registered nurse practitioners according to the scope of practice identified in the following rules:
 - a. LPN and RN ([WAC 246-840-700](#) and [WAC 246-840-705](#)); and
 - b. ARNP ([WAC 246-840-300](#));
 - E. Identification of the faculty member(s) responsible for the student's clinical learning experience and his or her educational qualifications and licensure;
 - F. Letter(s) or affiliation agreement from prospective clinical facilities or settings indicating the facilities' ability to accommodate students;
 - G. Identify the contact person at the clinical site and provide telephone and email addresses;
 - H. Evidence of discussion regarding cooperative planning with directors of existing nursing programs or clinical consortiums for use of potential affiliate agencies and clinical practice settings;

- I. Evidence of College or University institutional accreditation status;
 - J. Evidence of the program's current approval/accreditation status by the state board of nursing from the state where the nursing education program originates;
 - K. If accredited by a nursing or nursing-related accrediting organization recognized by the USDE or the CHEA, submit documentation of current accreditation status.
 - L. For programs that are not fully accredited (e.g. under review by accrediting body for initial accreditation or conditional accreditation) must submit copies of self-evaluation report(s) and any interim report(s) provided to the accrediting body;
 - M. Evidence that the program has been approved by WSAC;
 - N. Evidence of written policies related to the management of clinical learning experiences to be conducted in Washington including:
 - a. Evidence that faculty is responsible and accountable for managing clinical learning experiences of students. Note: The maximum faculty to student ratio for pre-licensure LPN and RN programs is 1:10;
 - b. Criteria and rationale for the selection of affiliate agencies or clinical practice settings appropriate for the program of study;
 - c. Process for the evaluation of the effectiveness for affiliating agencies/clinical facilities or clinical practice settings and the frequency of evaluation;
 - d. Written affiliation agreements between the program and agencies/clinical practice settings and the frequency of evaluation;
 - e. When clinical preceptors or clinical teaching assistants are used, written agreements between the program, clinical preceptor or clinical teaching assistant, and the affiliating agency, when applicable, delineating the functions and responsibilities of the parties involved;
 - f. Written criteria for the selection of competent clinical preceptors or clinical teaching assistants, and verification of qualifications; and
 - g. Process for the evaluation of student performance in clinical learning experiences, including criteria for the frequency of assessment.
 - O. Additional information and/or documentation may be requested in order to provide clarity.
3. NPAP may require the nurse educator advisor (NEA) to provide consultation or to conduct a site visit of the proposed clinical facilities, depending on the analysis of the written request and the required supporting documentation.
4. Programs are notified of NPAP decisions within 30 days of the panel meeting.
5. Students shall not be enrolled in the clinical learning experience to be conducted in Washington State until the clinical placements are approved by NPAP to provide this experience.
6. Renewal of clinical site approval(s) or student placement numbers will coincide with the evaluation of the program's annual report.