



Nova Scotia College of Respiratory Therapists

Policy Title: Audit Policy	
Date Approved: January 6, 2020	Category: Registration
Date of next revision:	Authority: Act S 2(E) (H), 4 (G), 10(F) (O) Regulations S 10(d), 13 General Bylaws C (1,2)

Policy Statement:

The Nova Scotia College of Respiratory Therapists is the body that regulates the practice of Respiratory Therapy and governs its members in accordance with the Respiratory Therapists Act and the Regulations to ensure members have the capacity, competence, capability and character to safely and ethically practice Respiratory Therapy.

The Continuing Competency Program (CCP) is a tool developed by the NSCRT Credential Committee to ensure that all licensed members of the College maintain and further develop the competencies required to safely, competently and ethically provide clinically appropriate care. Through an annual review of randomly selected audits of professional portfolios, the NSCRT ensures members comply with this mandatory program.

Definitions:

- **Audit** – An official review by the NSCRT of members' practice and/or practice areas, generally performed through review of professional portfolios.
- **Audit Assessment Criteria Rubric (AACR)** – An audit scoring system, listing all components of the continuing competency program, used in the review of professional portfolios to determine compliance.
- **Competence** – The ability to integrate and apply the knowledge, skills and judgement required to practise safely and ethically in a designated role and practice setting and includes both entry-level and continuing competencies.
- **Compliant** – Having all components of a professional portfolio be in accordance with the standards of the continuing competency program.
- **Continuing Competency Program (CCP)** – A regulatory program and quality assurance mechanism that ensures ongoing education is taking place for all active practice members of the College, and includes members of the non-practicing class, members on maternity, parental or sick leave, or members who registered late in the year.
- **Continuing Education Credits (CECs)** – Activities that have been defined as eligible under the continuing competency program.



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- **E-Volve E-learning module** – A mandatory, online continuing education credit developed by the College to assist members in acquiring information relevant to practice and to maintain currency.
- **E-Volve Self-Assessment Tool** – A mandatory, online assessment tool developed by the College to assist members in self-identifying areas of professional development.
- **Learning Log** – An online record, located on NSCRT members' portal, where identification of learning goals, resources, timelines, learning activities and self-reflection are recorded.
- **Non-compliant** – Failing to have any component of a professional portfolio be in accordance with the standards of the continuing competency program.
- **Professional Portfolio** – An online record of members' completed e-learning module, practice self-assessment, learning log, and record of practice hours.
- **Random Selection** – A defensible, transparent method of choosing members for professional portfolio review, where all individuals have an equal chance of being selected.

Policy/Procedure:

1. The College audits a percentage of Active-Practice license members' professional portfolios annually, as per the Bylaws, and includes members of the non-practicing class, members on maternity, parental or sick leave, or members who registered late in the year.
2. Member professional portfolios are the written record of member continuing education credits (CECs) and competency maintenance activities.
3. All College audits and audit scoring is strictly confidential. All parties involved in reviewing professional portfolios and scoring are bound by a confidentiality and privacy agreement, signed annually.
4. **Audit Selection Process:**
 - a. Following annual renewal, the audit sample is generated through random selection by the Registrar using a random number generator. The numbers generated correspond with the member's row in the data base.
 - b. Following the random selection of members, the generated list is printed, signed and dated by the Registrar and witnessed by the Chair of the Credentials Committee. It is then saved as per the NSCRT document storage policy.
 - c. Registrants will be notified by email, no later than June 1, advising they have been selected for audit of their professional portfolio.
 - d. The Registrar and Credentials Committee may specifically select members for audit outside of the random selection process if deemed appropriate. Such reasons include:
 - i. Submission of a non-compliant professional portfolio in the previous audit year,



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- ii. Declaration of non-compliance with the CCP in disclosure statement during online renewal or declaration to the Registrar and/or member of the Credentials Committee at any time of non-compliance with the CCP;
- iii. As part of an ongoing investigation and/or disciplinary decision;
- iv. Late submission of selected member's professional portfolio in the previous audit year; and
- v. Any other reason deemed appropriate by the Credentials Committee.

5. Professional Portfolio Submission Process:

- a. Continuing Education Credit requirements include the following:
 - i. Completion of the E-Volve E-learning module prior to renewal;
 - ii. Completion of the E-Volve Self-Assessment Tool prior to renewal (**beginning in 2021**);
 - iii. Completion of the online learning log; and
 - iv. Record of hours that the registrant has worked in the immediate previous 4-year period.
- b. Members must submit audited portfolios by July 1. Failure to submit a completed professional portfolio on time will result in an automatic audit the following license year.
- c. Members must upload all requirements to their NSCRT online member profile.
- d. No member shall be audited 2 consecutive years, except for the reasons stated in section 3(d).

6. Audit Review Process:

- a. All audited professional portfolios are reviewed by the Registrar and Deputy Registrar using the Audit Assessment Criteria Rubric (AACR), as detailed in the NSCRT Audit Assessment Criteria Rubric Policy.
 - b. The Credentials Committee is responsible for reviewing the audited professional portfolios of the Registrar and/or Deputy Registrar should they be randomly selected or selected for the reasons stated in section 3(d).
 - c. Professional portfolios deemed non-compliant with the CCP will be referred to the Credentials Committee for review and final decision and/or any required remediation.
7. Members will be notified via email of compliance or non-compliance with the CCP by September 1.
8. Notification emails will contain the following information:
- a. Compliant submissions:
 - i. Notification letter of compliance



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- ii. Copy of AACR.
 - b. Non-compliant submissions:
 - i. Notification letter of non-compliance detailing: deficiencies, remediation process, timelines, appeal process and
 - ii. Copy of AACR.
- 9. **Noncompliant or In-complete Portfolio Process:**
 - a. Following a non-compliant AACR score by the Registrar and Deputy Registrar, the portfolio will be referred to the Credentials Committee.
 - b. For transparency, the Credentials Committee will independently score the professional portfolio using the AACR.
 - c. The Credentials Committees is responsible for the final decision regarding compliance.
 - d. In collaboration with the Registrar, the Credentials Committee will detail steps the member must take to attain compliance.
 - e. The Registrar will communicate with the member the remediation process.
 - f. Remediation process may include, but is not limited to, the following:
 - i. Late submission penalty - Automatic inclusion in the audit process the following audit year;
 - ii. Assigned learning opportunities;
 - iii. Counselling on self-assessment, development of learning plans, and/or self-reflection; or
 - iv. Any other supportive measure deemed necessary by the Credentials Committee.
 - g. The Registrar and Deputy Registrar will score the updated professional portfolio within 7 days of receiving it.
 - h. Following a non-compliant AACR score of the updated professional portfolio by the Registrar and Deputy Registrar, the portfolio will again be referred to the Credentials Committee.
 - i. For transparency, the Credentials Committee will independently score the professional portfolio using the AACR.
 - j. The Credentials Committees is responsible for the final decision regarding compliance.
 - k. Based on the results of the scoring, the Credentials Committee will:
 - i. Issue a letter of compliance to the member, including a copy of the AACR; or
 - ii. Issue a letter of non-compliance to the member, including a copy of the AACR, notifying them of next steps.
- 10. Non-compliance with the NSCRT CCP, despite attempts at remediation by the Credentials Committee, can result in progressive disciplinary action, including referral to the NSCRT Complaints Committee for professional misconduct.



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References:

Respiratory Therapists Act S.N.S. 2007. c. 13.

Available at: <https://nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/respther.htm>

Respiratory Therapists Regulations made under Section 10 of the Respiratory Therapists Act

Available at: <https://www.nscrt.com/pdf/resources/regulations.pdf>

Nova Scotia College of Respiratory Therapists General Bylaws June 2008; Amended November 2018. S. (B) (C).

Available at: https://www.nscrt.com/images/2016_NSCRT_bylaws.pdf

Appendices:

Version History	
Date revised:	Reason for revision: