

Assessment for Substantial Equivalence

Date created: August 18, 2016

Date approved: June 13, 2017

Date last reviewed (RC): October 1, 2018

Date last reviewed (Board): October 29, 2018

Category: Registration

File code: Rc18/Policies/Rc-15-Assessment_for_Substantial_Equivalence_Oct_29_18_FINAL

Authority: HPA s.20; Bylaws s. 41(3) and 52.

Background:

Registration is granted through Committee review and approval of a summary of the information submitted by the applicant, as compiled by the Registrar/Deputy Registrar.

The Assessment for Substantial Equivalence is the process by which the CDBC evaluates knowledge, skills, abilities and judgement of

- internationally educated dietitians wishing to apply for registration;
- former and non-practicing registrants, who have been off the public register for more than six years, who wish to be reinstated; and
- former dietitians who are registering with the CDBC for the first time (e.g. former members of the BC Dietitians and Nutritionist Association (BCDNA) who never registered with the CDBC).

This assessment process allows applicants to have their combined dietetic education, practical training and work experience compared to the recognized standards of current Canadian dietetic practice. It also enables the CDBC to verify competence in all areas of dietetic practice and determine self-directed learning needs to bridge any gaps in knowledge skills abilities and judgement necessary to meet the CDBC registration requirements.

Policy:

- 1) All candidates who require assessments of their dietetic knowledge, skills, abilities and judgement must complete the Assessment for Substantial Equivalence process.
- 2) All candidates must submit:
 - a) a completed Application for Assessment for Substantial Equivalence through the CDBC online platform; and
 - b) the Assessment for Substantial Equivalence fees listed in Schedule “D” of the CDBC bylaws; and
 - c) any official documents associated with the Application for Assessment for Substantial Equivalence; and
 - d) a completed *Honesty Declaration Form*.

- 3) All application submissions must be received by the CDBC within the timeline of policy Rc-21: *Time Limitation for Open Applications*.
- 4) The Assessment for Substantial Equivalence consists of 4 parts:
 - a) A Competence Self-Assessment using the Canadian Dietetic Practice, Orientation and Self-Assessment Tool (OSAT) – developed and shared by the College of Dietitians of Ontario to provide detailed information about Canadian dietetic practice. Candidates rate their own knowledge, skills, abilities and judgement against the Integrated Competencies for Dietetic Education and Practice (ICDEP).
 - b) A Competence Self-Verification (CSV) – designed to verify candidates' self-ratings and assess knowledge, skills, abilities and judgement against the ICDEP. The CSV is an open-book, multiple-choice questions examination, that is completed independently and online. Answers are electronically graded.
 - c) A Practical Assessment Interview (PAI) – designed to help identify gaps in practical knowledge, skills, abilities and judgement, for entry-to-practice dietetics. Candidates are interviewed by Dietitians using six (6) case-based scenario questions. Responses are evaluated using a rubric.
 - d) A Self-Directed Learning (SDL) Plan – allows candidates to develop individualized upgrading plans based on CSV and PAI findings. Candidates choose academic upgrading courses from the CDBC's List of Approved Upgrading Courses only. Candidates develop practical upgrading plans with CDBC staff guidance. These plans are approved by the Registration Committee and must be completed in order to be eligible to apply for registration.

Competence Self-Assessment:

- 5) Candidates must submit a completed OSAT to the CDBC.
 - a) All practice areas assessed in the OSAT must be included in the submission.

Competence Self-Verification Case Studies:

- 6) Once assessment documents, completed OSAT and the Substantial Equivalence Assessment fee are received, candidates are sent links to access the online CSV Case Studies via email.
- 7) Candidates must complete the CSV Case Studies within 60 days from the date that the links are sent by the CDBC, to ensure currency and reliability of results.
- 8) The CSV Case Studies address the 5 practice areas defined in the ICDEP. Minimum passing scores for the practice areas are:
 - a) Professional Practice = 50%
 - b) Communication & Collaboration = 50%
 - c) Nutrition Management = 50%
 - d) Population & Public Health = 50%
 - e) Nutrition Care = 65%
- 9) All candidates are advised of results in writing.
- 10) The assessment process is discontinued for candidates who do not meet the minimum passing score in any of the five dietetic practice areas, after two attempts. This is because

gaps in knowledge, skills, abilities and judgement are considered too great to remediate through CDBC approved upgrading.

- a) Options for unsuccessful candidates, after the first attempt include:
 - i) self-study in the unsuccessful practice area(s) and take a final attempt at the CSV Case Studies . Fees are applicable for a second attempt (Substantial Equivalent Assessment fee as described in Schedule D).
- b) After the maximum number of attempts permitted for the CSV Case Studies, options are;
 - i) successfully complete a Canadian accredited dietetics program to be eligible to apply for CDBC registration; or
 - ii) appeal the CDBC's decision and/or the assessment process to the BC Health Professions Review Board.

11) The scores of candidates who pass the CSV Case Studies are also reviewed for knowledge proficiency. Scores in all five practice areas are assessed against minimum threshold scores set by the Registration Committee. Threshold scores are currently set at:

- a) Professional Practice = 60%
- b) Communication and Collaboration = 60%
- c) Nutrition Care = 70%
- d) Population & Public Health Nutrition = 60%
- e) Nutrition Management = 60%

12) Candidates who score below the set CSV Case Study threshold scores, in any practice area (i.e. less than 70% for Nutrition Care and less than 60% in all others), are required to complete academic upgrading in those practice areas.

- a) These candidates develop Self-Directed Learning (SDL) Plans comprised of university level courses chosen from the *CDBC's List of Approved Upgrading Courses* and any needed practical training upgrading.
- b) SDL plans are submitted to the Registration Committee for approval, before upgrading begins.

All upgrading courses must be completed in order to be eligible to apply for registration.

13) Candidates who score above the set threshold scores for the CSV Case Studies are exempt from academic upgrading in the practice areas.

- a) Candidates may be assigned academic upgrading in the following courses:
 - i) *Orientation to Canadian Healthcare – Culture and Context*, University of Toronto, as an introduction to healthcare practice for those with no healthcare experience in Canada; Note – this course has a minimum language proficiency requirement. and/or
 - ii) *Foodsafe Levels 1 & 2*, Foodsafe BC, as an introduction to safe food handling expectations and requirements, in BC.

Candidate may complete these courses without prior Registration Committee approval. However, these assigned courses must be completed in order to be eligible to apply for registration.

Practical Assessment Interview:

14) Once all five practice areas tested in the CSV Case Studies are passed, and the practical assessment fee is received by the CDBC, candidates may access the Practical Assessment Interview (PAI).

- 15) The PAI is conducted in person.
- 16) The interview consists 6 case-based scenarios that will evaluate the five dietetic practice areas:
 - a) Professional Practice
 - b) Communication and Collaboration
 - c) Nutrition Care (2 scenarios required)
 - d) Population and Public Health Nutrition
 - e) Nutrition Management
- 17) The PAI is audio recorded for CDBC evaluation reference only. Consent is obtained at the beginning of each interview.
- 18) Candidates are permitted 45 minutes to prepare responses, before the PAI begins.
 - a) Candidates are not permitted to access study aids, or electronic devices during response preparation.
- 19) During the PAI, candidates have a maximum of 15 minutes, per case-based scenario, to provide verbal responses.
- 20) A minimum of two (2) and maximum of three (3) Dietitians will evaluate candidate responses using a rubric for each question asked.
 - a) Rubric scores range on a number scale of 0 to 3
 - 0 = Did not meet expectations; missing crucial elements;
 - 1 = Broadly understands questions; able to answer basic questions
 - 2 = Understands the question and provides most of the key areas
 - 3 = Analyzes situation; thoroughly answers questionNote: score descriptions vary slightly per question.
- 21) Practical upgrading is required in practice areas where the majority of PAI averaged response scores are below "2".

Unsuccessful Applicants Who Wish to Re-apply

- 22) Candidates who fail the Assessment for Substantial Equivalence process may undergo a re-assessment for registration provided they:
 - a) submit proof of academic and practical training and/or work experience, that demonstrates substantial improvement in areas identified; and
 - b) demonstrates currency in dietetics within the 3 years immediately before the date of the request for re-assessment; and
 - c) fulfils all of the requirements specified in policy item #2 above.