

 DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY Re-entry to Program after Leave Policy	Policy Sponsor: School Council	Approval Date: January 27, 2020
	Responsible Unit: School of Nursing	Amendments: December 2, 2019

A. Background and Purpose

The School of Nursing is committed to student learning and progression and recognizes that due to extenuating circumstances students may be required to take a Leave of Absence. Students may request a Leave of Absence for illness, maternity leave, etc., for a period of no more than two semesters.

The re-entry process is intended to ensure students are prepared for return to the academic environment following a Leave of Absence or academic dismissal by assisting them to regain competencies of knowledge, skills and application (KSA) whereby they may continue and progress from the level of the program they are re-entering. Re-entry students are accountable for competent nursing practice and the SON provides an environment that supports the re-entry student to achieve this competence. **Competency assessment will be required for any student who has had an absence of more than 2 consecutive semesters.**

B. Application

This policy applies to all to all students in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program.

C. Definitions

- i) **Competence:** The ability to integrate and apply the knowledge, skill and abilities required to practice safely and ethically in a designated (in this case – student) role and practice setting for any given year.
- ii) **Competencies:** The specific knowledge, skills and abilities required by a nursing student to be considered competent in a designated role (year) and practice setting.
- iii) **Competency Assessment:** The process by which competency is assessed utilizing various methods and tools as appropriate for the level of competence expected in any given year and clinical course. Competency assessment establishes that the applicants to the nursing program have the capacity, competence, capability and character to safely and ethically practice within the parameters established for the nursing student.
- iv) **KSA-** Knowledge, skills and application, competencies assessed when a student returns to the program.

D. Policy:

Students who have been academically dismissed or who have left the nursing program for greater than two consecutive academic semesters are required to reapply to the nursing program. Readmission to the program is not guaranteed and the applicant must demonstrate their preparation to return to studies. Students re-entering the program are required to complete an assessment to ensure competency.

Student re-entry is not permitted if the student is dismissed from the nursing program for unprofessional conduct, violation of legal or ethical standards, or unsatisfactory clinical performance that compromises patient safety as set forth by the Nursing Program.

E. Administrative Structure

Undergraduate Student Affairs Committee
Undergraduate Studies Committee
SON School Council

1. Students reapplying to the nursing program after being away for more than 2 consecutive semesters are evaluated on an individual basis and may be required to take or repeat nursing courses before re-entering the clinical setting. Re-entry requires that a **competency assessment** will be completed for the pertinent level of re-entry e.g. Semester 4 requires N2715 knowledge and skills, Semester 5 requires N2715 and N2725 knowledge and skills, Semester 6 requires N2715, N2725 and N3715 knowledge and skills, Semester 7 required N2715, N2725, N3715 and N3725 knowledge and skills. An experienced lab/clinical instructor will carry out the competency assessment in the Clinical Learning and Simulation Centre (CLSC).
2. Upon completion of the negotiated learning plan, a competency assessment is documented by the CLSC instructor and placed in the student's file. A copy of the assessment is also given to the student to share with the course professor and/or instructors for the course they are entering. The student then proceeds to the course for which they were approved.

F. Procedures

1. Registrar receives an application https://dalonline.dal.ca/PROD/bwskalog.P_DispLoginNon from a student requesting a return to the nursing program and then notifies the Assistant Director, Undergraduate Studies, School of Nursing. The Yarmouth Site Administrator is notified by the Assistant Director, Undergraduate Studies, if the student is returning to the Yarmouth site.
2. The student is notified by the Registrar's Office of the decision for acceptance for re-entry, the entry level they have been approved at for return and if there is a need to audit any nursing courses that were previously completed.
3. A [Re-Entry After Leave Request Form](#) is completed by the student and submitted to the Assistant Director, Undergraduate Studies at the School of Nursing (and the

site Administrator in Yarmouth if applicable).

4. The Assistant Director, Undergraduate Studies will notify the faculty in the CLSC of the returning student or site Administrator in Yarmouth if applicable. It is the student's responsibility to contact the CLSC as soon as possible after the acceptance for re-entry in order to set-up an initial meeting and negotiate a learning plan.
5. When a student is readmitted to the nursing program following academic dismissal, subsequent failure in any course (including non-nursing courses, core nursing courses including clinical practica and electives) will result in academic dismissal from the program. Faculty of Health students who have been academically dismissed twice will not be allowed to reapply for admission (regulation 20.1.6)