



Provincial Dental Board of Nova Scotia

February 2, 2025

Re: Draft NSRDDA Continuing Competence Program Document

Dear Registrants and other stakeholders,

When the PDBNS is migrated under the *Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA)* – which we now expect to be May 1, 2025 – the *Dental Act* and the accompanying Regulations (including the [*Mandatory Continuing Dental Education \(MCDE\) Regulations*](#)) will be repealed.

Under the RHPA, regulators have the ability to create bylaws “*respecting a continuing-competence program for each licensing category and designation*”. (The MCDE Committee will become the Continuing Competence Committee.)

This necessitated the creation of a new standalone document outlining the parameters of the program. This document will replace the existing [*MCDE Regulations*](#) and the [*MCDE Guidelines*](#).

The draft document which follows is largely a repackaging of the material in the existing Regulations and Guidelines, hopefully with greater clarity. The goal at this time is not to reimagine the requirements or add additional requirements.

You will see that in Category 3 there has been an expansion and itemization of activities which may be claimed for credit. This expansion reflects recent deliberations of the MCDE Committee as well as contemporary societal trends and expectations from government.

The current MCDE Guidelines and Regulations (to be repealed upon migration) are also attached to this document for reference for those who may wish to do a “side-by-side” comparison as they review.

If you wish to submit feedback on this draft document, kindly send it via email to feedback.pdbns@eastlink.ca with “Continuing Competence” in the subject line by March 5, 2025.

Sincerely,

Dr. Doug Mackey, DDS
PDBNS Registrar



Nova Scotia Regulator

OF

DENTISTRY AND DENTAL ASSISTING

Continuing Competence Program (V13)

This will come into effect when the PDBNS migrates under the [Regulated Health Professions Act](#) in 2025.

Preamble

The Nova Scotia Regulator of Dentistry and Dental Assisting (the “NSRDDA”) is the organization which oversees the practices of dentistry and dental assisting in the province. The role¹ of the NSRDDA, with respect to the practices of dentistry and dental assisting, is to:

- protect the public from harm;
- serve and promote the public interest;
- preserve the integrity of the professions of dentistry and dental assisting, subject to the public interest; and
- maintain the public confidence in the ability of the NSRDDA to regulate dentistry and dental assisting.

One of the ways the NSRDDA fulfills its role is through quality assurance measures such as the Continuing Competence Program for dentists and dental assistants.

Continuing Competence

There are many ways that dentists and dental assistants strive to maintain their continuing competence. This includes the incorporation of self-assessment in day-to-day practice, measured against practice standards and guidelines as well as emerging research and technologies.

In addition to this, dentists and dental assistants are required to engage in formalized experiences to maintain continuing competence. This can include courses, study groups, committee involvement, and a variety of other experiences.

Cycles

Each registrant has a 3-year competence cycle. Cycles begin on January 1 in the calendar year after a registrant is first licensed and run until December 31 of the third year of their cycle.

Dentists must obtain
a minimum of
90 continuing competence credits in
each 3-year cycle

Dental assistants must obtain
a minimum of
36 continuing competence credits in
each 3-year cycle

Registrants must log their continuing competence experiences within their Alinity profile. More information about cycles and other procedural matters can be found in the General Guidelines beginning on page 7.

Cycles and Audits

At the end of each cycle, the continuing competence committee will perform a random audit of registrants’ continuing competence. The process for this is outlined in Appendix D.

¹ In accordance with Section 6 of the [Regulated Health Professions Act \(RHPA\)](#), modified for profession-specific context.

Categories of Continuing Competence Experiences

Continuing competence experiences which qualify for credit under this program fall into 3 categories. There are minimum and maximum requirements for each category for both dentists and dental assistants.

Category	General Description	Minimum and Maximum Credits
Category 1	<p>Category 1 continuing competence experiences are COURSES on scientific or clinical subject matter.</p> <p>The courses must be delivered by an approved sponsor as outlined in Appendix B.</p> <p>They may be either in-person or online.</p> <p>These courses or their educational equivalents shall have significant intellectual or practical content directly related to the practice of dentistry.</p>	<p>Dentists are required to complete a minimum of 30 credit hours in Category 1.</p> <p>Dental assistants are required to complete a minimum of 12 credits in Category 1.</p> <p>If they wish, dentists and dental assistants may fulfill all their continuing competence requirements with Category 1 experiences.</p>
Category 2	<p>Category 2 experiences are NOT COURSES but pertain to scientific or clinical subject matter.</p> <p>Like Category 1 experiences, they shall have significant intellectual or practical content directly related to the practice of dentistry.</p>	<p>There is no minimum requirement for Category 2 experiences. In other words, dentists and dental assistants do not need to have any Category 2 experiences unless they choose to.</p> <p>Dentists may claim up to 60 credits in Category 2 (subject to the guidelines which follow).</p> <p>Dental assistants may claim up to 24 credits in Category 2 (subject to the guidelines which follow).</p>
Category 3	<p>Category 3 experiences are NOT SCIENTIFIC OR CLINICAL.</p> <p>They are meant to encourage professional responsibility and ethical obligations of the dentist or dental assistant.</p>	<p>There is no minimum requirement for Category 3 experiences. In other words, dentists and dental assistants do not need to have any Category 3 experiences unless they choose to.</p> <p>Dentists may claim up to 30 credits in Category 3 (subject to the guidelines which follow).</p> <p>Dental assistants may claim up to 12 credits in Category 3 (subject to the guidelines which follow).</p>

Category 1

- A minimum of 30 Category 1 credit hours are required for dentists in each cycle.
- A minimum of 12 Category 1 credit hours are required for dental assistants in each cycle.

Type of Experience	Description / Criteria	Credits Awarded / Limits
a) In-person lecture on scientific or clinical topics	These courses or their educational equivalents shall have significant intellectual or practical content directly related to the practice of dentistry.	1 credit hour will be awarded for each hour of lecture.
b) Hands-on course on scientific or clinical topics	The same criteria set out in Category 1a) apply.	2 credit hours will be awarded for each hour of hands-on experience.
c) Hybrid lecture / hands-on course on scientific or clinical topics	The same criteria set out in Category 1a) apply.	1 credit hour will be awarded for each hour of lecture. 2 credit hours will be awarded for each hour of hands-on experience.
d) BLS/CPR/ACLS/PALS	To be approved for credit, courses must be in-person. Credit can be claimed in successive years of a registrant's cycle.	1 credit hour will be awarded for each hour of training, to a maximum of 12 credit hours per cycle.
e) Live webinar on scientific or clinical topics	The same criteria set out in Category 1a) apply. No post-course quiz/examination is required for live webinars.	1 credit hour will be awarded for each hour of the live webinar.
f) Online asynchronous ("on-demand") lecture on scientific or clinical topics	The same criteria set out in Category 1a) apply. Course verification must indicate the successful completion of a post-course quiz/examination.	1 credit hour will be awarded for each hour of lecture.
g) Participation in an approved Category 1 study club	In order to be approved as a Category 1 study club, it must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be highly structured, • include both didactic instruction and hands-on clinical experience, and • meet on a periodic, scheduled basis. 	1 credit hour will be awarded for each hour of lecture. 2 credit hours will be awarded for each hour of hands-on experience.
h) Management of medical emergencies in the dental office	This is a mandatory requirement once per 3-year cycle. The course may be in-person or online and must be a minimum of 3 hours in duration. The course must cover all the topics outlined in Appendix C.	1 credit hour will be awarded for each hour of the course, regardless of whether there is a hands-on component.
i) Lectures on scientific or clinical topics at a regional society meeting	The same criteria set out in Category 1a) apply. NOTE: Where the content is applicable, a maximum of 50% of the time spent at a regional society meeting may be claimed for Category 1 credit. The remainder of the time may be claimed in Category 3, to a maximum of 5 hours per meeting.	Credit for 50% of the meeting time will be awarded in Category 1 if the criteria in Category 1a) are met. Credit for the remainder of the meeting time will be awarded in Category 3 to a maximum total of 5 credit hours per meeting.

- A maximum of 60 Category 2 credit hours may be claimed by dentists in each cycle.
- A maximum of 24 Category 2 credit hours may be claimed by dental assistants in each cycle.

Type of Experience	Description / Criteria	Credits Awarded / Limits
a) Faculty position	Credit will be awarded for a full-time or part-time faculty position (lecture or clinician) with direct student contact.	1 credit hour will be awarded for every 7 faculty hours to a maximum of 20 credit hours per year.
b) Presentation of an approved course	These include formal courses, lectures or talks at dental meetings and study club presentations.	2 credit hours will be awarded for each hour of presentation time.
c) Publication of an article	Credit will be awarded for publication of a dentally-related article published in a refereed journal of dental literature.	20 credit hours will be awarded for each article published. Where a dentally-related article is authored by more than one person, each author will receive credit hours proportionate to the total number of authors.
d) Author of a book or chapter in a book	To be approved for credit, the book or chapter of a book must be on a dentally-related topic.	Credit will be awarded on an individual basis.
e) Presentation of a research paper	Credit will be awarded to the presenter of a research paper or abstract at a scientific meeting.	5 credit hours will be awarded for each presentation.
f) Attendance at an approved study club.	These are study clubs other than Category 1 study clubs described in Category 1g).	1 credit hour will be awarded for each hour of attendance. 2 credit hours will be awarded for each hour of hands-on activity. Note: If the presenter is not a member of the study club, credit will be awarded in Category 1 or 3 (depending on the subject matter).
g) Learning contract	A learning contract can consist of a variety of learning activities, e.g., literature review, clinical practice, internship, etc., designed to meet a specific learning objective. A formalized learning contract must exist between a mentor and one or more individuals which is subject to approval by the continuing competence committee.	Total credit hours will be based on the recommendation of the mentor as the reasonable amount of time necessary to learn the material.
h) Examining bodies	Credit will be given for work as an examiner for a national examining body for dentistry or dental assisting.	1 credit hour will be awarded for each hour of participation in examination development or evaluation to a maximum of 20 credit hours per year.

Category 3

- A maximum of 30 Category 3 credit hours may be claimed by dentists in each cycle.
- A maximum of 12 Category 3 credit hours may be claimed by dental assistants in each cycle.

Type of Experience	Description / Criteria	Credits Awarded / Limits
a) Course on practice management	Credit will be awarded for attendance at a course or session pertaining to practice management.	1 credit hour will be awarded for each hour of attendance.
b) Attendance at a meeting	<p>Credit will be awarded for participation or attendance at meetings of dental or dental assisting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • committees, • regulatory bodies, • societies, and • professional associations. <p>The organizations may be local, provincial, national or international.</p>	<p>1 credit hour will be awarded for each hour of attendance or training related to board/committee work to a maximum of 5 hours per meeting or training.</p> <p>Verification of attendance may be in the form of an agenda or other document (redacted as needed) indicating the registrant's presence.</p>
c) Attendance at a convention or conference	Credit will be awarded for attendance at a dental conference or multidisciplinary health conference.	<p>A maximum of 5 credit hours will be awarded for attendance at each conference, whether it is a single-day or multi-day conference.</p> <p>With verification, additional credit may be awarded for individual experiences (e.g., lectures) as part of the conference. (In such cases, lectures on scientific or clinical topics would qualify for credit in Category 1.)</p>
d) Personal development course	Credit will be awarded for attendance at a course for personal development, directly of benefit to the practice of dentistry or dental assisting (e.g., communication, bookkeeping).	1 credit hour will be awarded for each hour of attendance to a maximum of 5 hours per course.
e) Mental health and wellness	Credit will be awarded for attendance at a course or session pertaining to mental health and wellness.	1 credit hour will be awarded for each hour of attendance to a maximum of 5 hours per event.
f) Equity, diversity, inclusion, and reconciliation	Credit will be awarded for attendance at a course or session pertaining to equity, diversity, inclusion, and reconciliation.	1 credit hour will be awarded for each hour of attendance to a maximum of 5 hours per event.
g) Sexual misconduct or gender-based / intimate-partner violence	Credit will be awarded for attendance at a course or session pertaining to sexual misconduct or gender-based / intimate-partner violence.	1 credit hour will be awarded for each hour of attendance to a maximum of 5 hours per event.
h) Volunteering	<p>Credit will be awarded for volunteering in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clinical dentistry (e.g., on a dental "mission" or in a pro bono clinic for low-income persons) • public outreach regarding oral health (e.g., presentation at a school, service organization) • raising awareness of the profession (e.g., career day at a high school). 	<p>1 credit hour will be awarded for each hour of volunteering to a maximum of 5 hours per day.</p> <p>Verification of the volunteering must be provided by the organizing body.</p>

Most often, a registrant attending a study club activity will receive credit in Category 2.

- 1 credit hour will be awarded for each hour of attendance.
- 2 credit hours will be awarded for each hour of hands-on activity (if applicable).

The following situations are exceptions in which credit for study club attendance will be awarded in a category other than Category 2:

1. Approved Category 1 study club	<p>Credit will be awarded in Category 1 credit for participation in an approved Category 1 study club.</p> <p>In order to be approved as a Category 1 study club, it must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• be highly structured,• include both didactic instruction and hands-on clinical experience, and• meet on a periodic scheduled basis. <p>A study club organizer who believes that their study club should be recognized as a Category 1 study club must apply in writing to the registrar, outlining the justification for their position. The registrar will then bring the matter before the continuing competence committee.</p>
2. External presenter (at a study club which is not a Category 1 study club)	<p>Credit will be awarded in Category 1 or 3 (depending on the subject matter) to all present if the presenter at the study club is not a member of the study club (e.g., a guest lecturer or presenter).</p>

Study clubs must be registered and approved by the registrar and will appear on the NSRDDA website.

Registrants wishing to have a study club approved must submit the following information in writing:

1. The name of the study club
2. The subject matter (which can be specific to dentistry or of general interest pertaining to dentistry)
3. Membership information, including
 - the names of the members, of which there must be a minimum of 5 and who all must be licensed healthcare professionals,
 - the name of the chair, and
 - the practice addresses of all members, including the chair.

Full-Time Study

A registrant's enrollment in full-time study (e.g., post-graduate study, internships, residencies) related to dentistry will fulfill that registrant's continuing competence requirements for the period of their full-time study.

A new three-year continuing competence cycle for that registrant will commence on January 1 in the calendar year following successful completion of the program.

Appendix A – General Guidelines

1. Continuing competence cycles will be three years in length, beginning on January 1 of the first year of the cycle.
2. New registrants whose date of initial registration is in a month other than January will have a continuing competence cycle beginning on January 1 of the following calendar year. Once their cycle begins, they will be able to claim credit for all qualifying continuing competence activities which have taken place after their date of initial licensure, even those prior to the January 1 start of their cycle.
3. Recording and verification of continuing competence activities are the responsibility of the registrant.
4. All licensed registrants are required to log their continuing dental education experiences and upload verification within the Alinity portal on an ongoing basis. Licensees must also retain their own copies of verification for one year following cycle completion. Hard copies of verification must be made available if requested by the Continuing Dental Education Committee and/or in response to an audit.
5. Credits obtained prior to commencement of a three-year cycle do not count toward necessary credits for that cycle, except for new registrants, as outlined in Guideline 2.
6. Surplus credits accumulated in a three-year cycle cannot be carried forward to the subsequent cycle.
7. Continuing education required to be taken as a result of a regulatory process (e.g., complaints, professional conduct) cannot be used towards the total number of credits necessary to satisfy the continuing competence requirements.
8. Falsification of any information will be considered professional misconduct.
9. Independent study which is not examined or monitored will not qualify for credit hours.
10. There will be no prior approval of courses (other than what is implicit in the Guidelines). Courses that do not fit the criteria contained within the Guidelines will be assessed only after they have been taken.
11. Registrants or groups of registrants who wish to provide dentally-related courses outside of the context of an approved study club must do so through an approved sponsor.
12. The continuing competence committee is given the authority to approve or disapprove credits for courses or equivalents that it considers to be of questionable content to the practice of dentistry.
13. A registrant who is not renewing their license for the coming year due to reasons of health, moving from the province, etc. must inform the registrar in writing. The registrant's three-year cycle will be maintained and the requirements prorated according to the [continuing competence proration table](#).

Should such a registrant have their license reinstated at a future point following the continuing competence cycle in which they relinquished their license, they will be assigned a new cycle beginning on January 1 of the calendar year in which their license is reinstated. Their continuing competence requirements will be prorated according to the time remaining in their cycle at that time.

Despite the proration or requirements, a course on the Management of Medical Emergencies in the Dental Office will still be mandatory once per continuing competence cycle.

A registrant who is dissatisfied with the decision of the registrar regarding the proration of their continuing competence cycle may appeal the registrar's decision to the continuing competence committee within 30 days of receiving the decision.

14. A registrant who is removed from the register for late payment of fees or as a result of disciplinary activity does not begin a new cycle upon reinstatement. The original three-year cycle remains in effect.
15. A registrant who, for health reasons, is unable to pursue continuing education credits for more than a cumulative six-month period during a three-year cycle will be eligible to apply to have their continuing competence requirements for the current cycle modified according to the [continuing competence proration table](#). It is the responsibility of the licensee to apply, in writing, to the registrar for the proration, as soon as possible prior to completion of the present three-year cycle. Supporting documentation is to be submitted if requested.

A registrant who is dissatisfied with the decision of the registrar regarding the proration of their continuing competence cycle may appeal the registrar's decision to the continuing competence Committee within 30 days of receiving the decision.

16. Any licensed registrant who is audited and found to not have completed the minimum requirements set out in this document shall be ineligible for license renewal until they have obtained the required credit hours to meet the requirements of this program.

In this situation, any credits obtained to fulfill the requirements for a previous cycle cannot be used to fulfill the requirements for the current cycle.

17. A registrant who is in dispute with the continuing competence committee with respect to the continuing competence credits recorded for them may appeal the matter to the NSRDDA board and the finding of the board shall be final and binding.

Appendix B – Approved Sponsors

A course or its equivalent delivered by one of the following types of sponsors would likely qualify for credit in Category 1 (assuming all other criteria for the category are met):

- a. Accredited oral health education programs at post-secondary institutions
- b. Provincial, state and national professional associations for oral health professions
- c. Regional societies for oral health professions
- d. Federal government health agencies, including the Canadian Armed Forces
- e. Governmental departments of health or public health
- f. Hospitals accredited by Accreditation Canada
- g. National and international oral health organizations recognized by the Canadian or American Dental and Dental Assisting Associations
- h. A dental industry organization delivering a dentally-related course
- i. A health organization not related to dentistry delivering a dentally-related course

Appendix C – Management of Medical Emergencies

All registrants are required to complete a course on the Management of Medical Emergencies in the Dental Office at least once per cycle.

The course may be in-person or online and must be a minimum of 3 hours in duration.

If the course is online and asynchronous (i.e., “on-demand”, not live), course verification must indicate the successful completion of a post-course quiz/examination.

Credit Awarded

1 credit hour will be awarded for each hour of the course, regardless of whether there is a hands-on component.

An inexhaustive list of course providers can be found [at this link](#).

Acceptable courses must cover all the following topics:	
a.	Basic Physiology
b.	Emergency Preparedness
c.	Equipment and Supplies
d.	Vasovagal Syncope (Loss of Consciousness)
e.	Acute Coronary Syndrome / Myocardial Infarction / Angina
f.	Foreign Body Aspiration / Airway Obstruction
g.	Allergy / Anaphylaxis
h.	Acute Asthma / Bronchospasm
i.	Diabetic Emergencies
j.	Seizures
k.	Stroke / Cerebrovascular Accident

Appendix D – Committee Terms of Reference, Governance, and Audit Process

1. The board shall appoint a continuing competence committee consisting of:
 - a) at least two licensed dentists,
 - b) at least two licensed dental assistants,
 - c) the registrar, and
 - d) the deputy registrar.
2. Terms for committee members are three years.
3. Committee members may be appointed for a maximum of three consecutive three-year terms.
4. From among the dentists on the committee, the board shall appoint a chair and a vice-chair of the continuing competence committee.
5. The quorum for a meeting of the committee shall be 50% of the members and must include a minimum of one dentist and one dental assistant.
6. The continuing competence committee shall:
 - a) administer the continuing competence program in accordance with guidelines recommended by the committee and approved by the board,
 - b) recommend to the board approval of amendments to the general guidelines or any other element of this document,
 - c) perform an annual audit of continuing competence experiences through a random process wherein 15% of licensed dentists and 15% of licensed dental assistants are selected for audit,
 - d) approve continuing competence activities and assign credit for such activities,
 - e) notify registrants selected for audit regarding,
 - the result of their audit, and
 - if there are deficiencies, what the deficiencies are and the deadline to have obtained the required credit hours to meet the requirements of this program, and
 - f) establish other requirements for the proper administration of the continuing competence program, including appropriate delegation of duties to the registrar and other staff.
7. The registrar shall:
 - a) maintain the records of the continuing competence program,
 - b) serve as the administrator of the continuing competence program in conjunction with other staff, and
 - c) report on the activities of the committee and the administration of the program in:
 - operational reports to the board,
 - periodic publications for registrants and the public, and
 - as required by the Department of Health and Wellness.

Document History

This document was first approved by the Provincial Dental Board of Nova Scotia on January 31, 2025 for circulation to registrants for consultation.

Following the consultation period, the final version will be approved by the Board to come into effect when the PDBNS is migrated under the [*Regulated Health Professions Act \(RHPA\)*](#) later in 2025.

Approximate date of next review by continuing competence committee: 2028 (or sooner as required)

Mandatory Continuing Dental Education Regulations (Regulation 9)

made under subsection 45(1) of the

Dental Act

S.N.S. 1992, c. 3

O.I.C. 94-486, N.S. Reg. 97/94

June 7, 1994

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This publication is unofficial and is for reference only. For the official version of the regulations, consult the original documents on file with the Office of the Registrar of Regulations, or as published in the Royal Gazette Part II.

Regulations are amended frequently. Please make sure that you have the most up-to-date version. To do this, either contact us or check the list of Regulations by Act on our website at www.novascotia.ca/just/regulations.

Mandatory Continuing Dental Education Regulations (Regulation 9)
made under subsection 45 (1) of the
Dental Act
S.N.S. 1992, c. 3
O.I.C. 94-486 (June 7, 1994), N.S. Reg. 97/94

- 1** In this regulation
 - (a) “Act” means the *Dental Act*, S.N.S. 1992, c. 3, as amended;
 - (b) “Board” means the Provincial Dental Board of Nova Scotia;
 - (c) “Committee” means the Continuing Dental Education Committee;
 - (d) “Registrar” means the Registrar of the Board.
- 2** This regulation is made by the Board pursuant to clause (j) of subsection (1) of Section 45 of the Act.
- 3**
 - (1)** Every licensed dentist is required to obtain ninety credit hours of continuing dental education during each three year cycle established by the Committee pursuant to clause (b) of Section 7 of this regulation.
 - (2)** Except as provided in subsections (3) and (4), any licensed dentist who fails to complete the requirements of subsection (1) shall be ineligible for license renewal until such licensed dentist has obtained the required credit hours to meet the requirements of subsection (1).
 - (3)** A licensed dentist who has not completed the requirements of subsection (1) may be eligible for license renewal by successfully completing the National Dental Examining Board examinations for dentists. Such examination may be taken at any regular examination time during the three year cycle but no later than the last regular examination time during the three year cycle.
 - (4)** In extraordinary circumstances the Committee may extend the time for a licensed dentist to complete the requirements of subsection (1).
- 4**
 - (1)** Every licensed dental hygienist is required to obtain forty-five credit hours of continuing dental education during each three year cycle.
 - (2)** Except as provided in subsections (3) and (4), any licensed dental hygienist who fails to complete the requirements of subsection (1) shall be ineligible for license renewal until such licensed dental hygienist has obtained the required credit hours to meet the requirements of subsection (1).
 - (3)** A licensed dental hygienist who has not completed the requirements of subsection (1) may be eligible for license renewal if the licensed dental hygienist has completed during the three year cycle clinical and written examinations set by the Board.

- (4) In extraordinary circumstances the Committee may extend the time for a licensed dental hygienist to complete the requirements of subsection (1).
- 5
 - (1) Every licensed dental assistant is required to obtain thirty-six credit hours of continuing dental education during each three year cycle.
 - (2) Except as provided in subsections (3) and (4), any licensed dental assistant who fails to complete the requirements of subsection (1) shall be ineligible for license renewal until such licensed dental assistant has obtained the required credit hours to meet the requirements of subsection (1).
 - (3) A licensed dental assistant who has not completed the requirements of subsection (1) may be eligible for license renewal if the licensed dental assistant has completed during the three year cycle clinical and written examinations set by the Board.
 - (4) In extraordinary circumstances the Committee may extend the time for a licensed dental assistant to complete the requirements of subsection (1).
- 6
 - (1) The Board shall appoint a Continuing Dental Education Committee consisting of eight members, as follows:
 - (a) three licensed dentists;
 - (b) two licensed dental hygienists;
 - (c) two licensed dental assistants;
 - (d) the Registrar.
 - (2) The Board shall consult with the Nova Scotia Dental Association, Nova Scotia Dental Hygienists' Association and Nova Scotia Dental Assistants' Association in making appointments to the Committee.
 - (3) The term of members of the Committee shall be two years and the appointments shall be staggered to permit continuity.
 - (4) The Board may appoint any member for two additional consecutive two year terms.
 - (5) The Board shall appoint one of the licensed dentists to be Chairperson of the Committee who shall be entitled to vote on all matters before the Committee.
 - (6) In absence of the Chairperson, the other members may appoint one of the other licensed dentists to act as Chairperson of any meeting of the Committee.
 - (7) The quorum for a meeting of the Committee shall be five.
- 7 The Committee shall
 - (a) establish and administer the mandatory continuing dental education program in accordance with guidelines established from time to time by the Board;

- (b) determine when each three year cycle begins;
- (c) approve continuing dental education courses and assign credits to such courses;
- (d) encourage sponsoring agencies to offer a sufficient number and variety of continuing dental education courses;
- (e) cooperate with organized groups within dentistry with regard to continuing dental education requirements;
- (f) determine the reporting and verification procedures for licensed dentists, dental hygienists, and dental assistants participating in the mandatory continuing dental education program;
- (g) report annually to the Board, the Nova Scotia Dental Association, the Nova Scotia Dental Hygienists' Association and the Nova Scotia Dental Assistants' Association respecting the mandatory continuing dental education program;
- (h) impose other requirements for the proper operation of the mandatory continuing dental education program.

8 The Registrar shall

- (a) maintain the records of the mandatory continuing dental education program;
- (b) serve as the administrator of the mandatory continuing dental education program.

9 Any licensed dentist, dental hygienist or dental assistant who is in dispute with the Committee with respect to the continuing dental education credits recorded for such person may appeal the matter to the Board and the finding of the Board shall be final and binding.

MANDATORY CONTINUING DENTAL EDUCATION GUIDELINES

(Revised July 19, 2024)

These Guidelines are drawn in compliance with Section 7 (a) of the
Mandatory Continuing Dental Education Regulation.

POLICY STATEMENT: It is understood that courses, or their educational equivalent, shall have significant intellectual or practical content directly related to the practice of dentistry or to the professional responsibility or ethical obligation of the participant.

Required Credit Hours in a Three-Year Cycle:
Dentists 90; Registered Dental Assistants 36

I. GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. The Committee will establish the implementation date (anniversary date) for the Mandatory Continuing Dental Education Program.
2. The three-year cycle for each current licensee will commence on the anniversary date.
3. Only first-time licensees will be awarded credits from the date of licensure. The three-year cycle will begin on January 1 of the following calendar year.
4. Recording and verification of mandatory continuing dental education credits is the responsibility of the licensee.
5. All licensees are required to log their continuing dental education experiences and upload verification within the Alinity portal on an ongoing basis. Licensees must also retain their own copies of verification for one year following cycle completion. Hard copies of verification must be made available if requested by the Continuing Dental Education Committee and/or in response to an audit.
6. Credits obtained prior to commencement of a three-year cycle do not count toward necessary credits for that cycle, excepting first-time licensees, as in Guideline No. 3.
7. Surplus credits accumulated in a three-year cycle cannot be carried forward to the subsequent cycle.
8. Continuing education taken as a result of a Board or Discipline Committee ruling cannot be used towards the total number of credits necessary to satisfy the Mandatory Continuing Education requirement.
9. Falsification of any information will be considered professional misconduct.
10. Independent study which is not examined or monitored will not qualify for credit hours.

11. There will be no prior approval of courses (other than that implicit in the Guidelines). Courses that do not fit the criteria contained within the Guidelines will be assessed only after they have been taken.
12. Licensees or groups of licensees who wish to provide dentally related CDE courses outside of the context of an approved study club must do so through an approved sponsor.
13. The Continuing Dental Education Committee is given the authority to approve or disapprove credits for courses or equivalents that it considers to be of questionable content to the practice of dentistry.
14. A licensee who is not renewing his/her license for the coming year because of reasons of health, moving from the province etc. must advise the Registrar in writing. The licensee's three-year cycle is maintained, and the requirements modified according to the [MCDE Proration Table](#).

Should such a licensee have their license reinstated at a future point following the MCDE cycle in which they relinquished their license, they will be assigned a new MCDE cycle beginning on January 1 of the calendar year in which their license is reinstated. Their MCDE requirements will be prorated according to the time remaining in their cycle at that time.

Regardless of requirement proration, a course on the Management of Medical Emergencies in the Dental Office will still be mandatory once per MCDE cycle.

A registrant who is dissatisfied with the decision of the Registrar regarding the proration of their MCDE cycle may appeal the Registrar's decision to the MCDE Committee within 30 days of receiving the decision.

15. A licensee who is removed from the Register for late payment of fees or as a result of disciplinary activity does not begin a new cycle upon reinstatement. The original three-year cycle remains in effect.
16. A licensee who, for health reasons, is unable to pursue continuing education credits for more than a cumulative six-month period during a three-year cycle will be eligible to apply to have his/her MCDE requirements for the current cycle modified according to the [MCDE Proration Table](#). It is the responsibility of the licensee to apply, in writing, to the Registrar for the proration, as soon as possible prior to completion of the present three-year cycle. Supporting documentation is to be submitted if requested.

A registrant who is dissatisfied with the decision of the Registrar regarding the proration of their MCDE cycle may appeal the Registrar's decision to the MCDE Committee within 30 days of receiving the decision.

17. A licensee who is in dispute with the Committee with respect to the continuing dental education credits recorded for him or her may appeal the matter to The Board and the finding of The Board shall be final and binding.

II. MANDATORY CONTINUING DENTAL EDUCATION CREDIT HOURS MAY BE ACCUMULATED FROM THREE CATEGORIES

Category 1

- A. Scientific/clinical courses (in-person attendance or on-line) or their equivalents (e.g., ethics).

These courses or their educational equivalents shall have significant intellectual or practical content directly related to the practice of dentistry. On-line courses qualify for credit if the registrant successfully completes a post-test examination.

- B. Scientific/clinical hands-on participation.

These experiences will be awarded two credit hours for each hour of participation.

- C. Medical Emergencies Course – Mandatory requirement once per cycle (starting with the 2020 -2023 cycle). Course must be a minimum of half-day in duration.

- D. Live webinars on topics identified in paragraph (A) offered by regulatory organizations, approved sponsors, and study clubs are eligible for credit with proper verification that the registrant attended the webinar. Post-tests are not required for live webinars.

Note: Since all registrants are required to attest that they have current BLS/CPR certification at the time of annual license renewal effective 2023, it will no longer be a requirement for those selected for MCDE audit to submit proof of a BLS/CPR course. However, such courses are still eligible for credit if a registrant chooses to include them in audit submissions

A MINIMUM OF 30 CREDIT HOURS FOR DENTISTS AND 12 CREDIT HOURS FOR DENTAL ASSISTANTS MUST BE OBTAINED FROM THIS CATEGORY.

SPONSORSHIP

The following sponsors of a continuing education course or equivalent would likely be approved for credit hours under this category if it fulfills the criteria:

- (a) Accredited dental, dental hygiene and dental assisting schools, universities and colleges.
- (b) Provincial, state and national dental, dental hygiene and dental assisting associations.
- (c) Regional dental, dental assisting, and dental hygiene societies.
- (d) Federal government health agencies, including the military service.
- (e) Provincial and local government departments of health or public health.
- (f) Hospitals accredited by the Canadian Council of Hospital Accreditation.
- (g) National and international dental, dental hygiene, and dental assisting organizations recognized by the Canadian or American Dental and Dental Assisting Associations.
- (h) A dentally related course sponsored by a dental industry organization.
- (i) A dentally related course sponsored by a health organization, non-dentistry.

Note for Regional Societies: In meetings where presentations are made, participants will receive 50% of the total meeting hours in Category 3 for meeting attendance. The remaining 50% of the total meeting hours will be assigned to Category 1 or 3, depending on the subject matter. A maximum total of 5 credit hours per meeting will be awarded.

Category 2

- A. Other scientific/clinical experiences (i.e., not courses).
- B. Other scientific/clinical hands-on participation will be awarded two credit hours for each hour of participation.

A MAXIMUM OF 60 CREDIT HOURS FOR DENTISTS AND 24 CREDIT HOURS FOR DENTAL ASSISTANTS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM CATEGORY 2.

The number of credit hours obtained will vary according to the activity involved. Credit hours awarded are as follows:

- (a) Part-time or full-time faculty who are appointed by their institution to an instructor position (e.g., lecturer or clinician in direct student contact in clinics will receive 1 credit hour for every 7 faculty hours to a maximum of 20 credit hours per year).
- (b) Presenters of approved courses will receive two credit hours per one hour presentation time. These include formal courses, lectures or talks at dental meetings and study club presentations.
- (c) For each dentally related article published in a refereed journal of dental literature, 20 credit hours will be given.
- (d) Where a dentally related article is authored by more than one person, each author will receive credit hours proportionate to the total number of authors.
- (e) Authors of books or chapters in books will be awarded credits on an individual basis.
- (f) The presenter of a research paper or abstract at a scientific meeting will receive five credit hours.
- (g) Attendance at approved study clubs will qualify for hour for hour credit.
- (h) A learning contract can consist of a variety of learning activities, e.g., literature review, clinical practice, internship, etc., designed to meet a specific learning objective. A formalized learning contract must exist between a mentor and one or more individuals which is subject to approval by the continuing education committee. Total credit hours will be based on the recommendation of the mentor as the reasonable amount of time necessary to learn the material.

Category 3

Non-scientific/non-clinical experiences. These experiences are to encourage professional responsibility and ethical obligations of the dentist or dental assistant.

One credit hour is awarded per hour of participation or attendance.

A MAXIMUM OF 30 CREDITS FOR DENTISTS AND 12 CREDIT HOURS FOR DENTAL ASSISTANTS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM CATEGORY 3.

The following would likely be approved for continuing education credit hours under this category:

- (a) A course attended for practice management.
- (b) Participation or attendance at meetings of dental committees, dental boards, dental societies, dental associations, dental multi-day conventions or interdisciplinary health conferences, whether local, provincial, national or international, to a maximum of five credit hours per meeting.
- (c) A course attended for personal development, directly of benefit to the practice of dentistry, will qualify for a maximum of five credit hours per course.

III. FULL TIME STUDY

Graduate study, internships, residencies, licensees engaged in acceptable full-time programs, will fulfill their requirements for the period of their full-time program and a new three-year cycle will commence on the anniversary date following successful completion of the program.

IV. STUDY CLUBS

Members of registered/approved study clubs will receive hour for hour credit in Category 2 (i). Hands on activity will be awarded two credit hours for each hour of participation. During the COVID-19 pandemic study clubs may meet virtually. For Category 1, registrants will be awarded credits after successful completion of a post-test examination, Category 2 and Category 3 courses do not require a post-test examination.

Study club presentations, related to the practice of dentistry by a presenter, not a member of the Study Club, will receive Category 1 or 3 credits depending on the subject matter.

Study clubs must be registered/approved by the Registrar, providing the following information:

1. Name of the study club
2. Subject matter:
 - (a) Can be of specific interest to dentistry
 - (b) Can be of general interest pertaining to dentistry
3. Membership:
 - (a) Minimum of five members;
 - (b) Name of chair, including address
 - (c) Name of members, including addresses;
 - (d) Members must be licensed health professionals.