



Policy Category:	Policy Title:	Policy #:
Registration	Entry-to-Practice Examination Approval	POL-R-10
Bylaw Reference:	HPA Reference:	
Sections 21, 21.1, 68, 82, 85	Section 19	
Authorization:	Date Approved:	Last Revised:
CSHBC Board	July 24, 2020	

DEFINITIONS

“Board” means the Board of Directors of the College of Speech and Hearing Health Professionals of British Columbia (“CSHBC”) pursuant to section 17 of the *Health Professions Act* (the “HPA”).

“Examination Advisory Committee” means the CSHBC Examination Advisory Committee (the “EAC”) established under section 21.1 of the CSHBC Bylaws.

“Entry-to-practice examination” means an entry-to-practice examination (“ETP exam”) required under sections 82(1)(b) and s.85(1)(b) of the CSHBC Bylaws as a condition of Full registration, and for the purpose of ensuring ETP-level competency.

“HPA” means the *Health Professions Act*.

“Proposed Exam” means an ETP exam to be considered for approval by the CSHBC Registration Committee.

“Quality Assurance & Professional Practice Committee” means the CSHBC Quality Assurance & Professional Practice Committee (the “QAPP Committee”) established under section 26.1 of the HPA and section 24 of the CSHBC Bylaws. QAPP Committee members may be involved in ETP exam assessment work as individuals, in small teams, or as part of a working group.

“Registration Committee” means the CSHBC Registration Committee (the “RC”) established under section 21 of the CSHBC Bylaws with a statutory duty to exercise its powers and discharge its responsibilities in the public interest under section 19 of the HPA.

“Subject Matter Expert” means an individual with profession- and context-specific knowledge that may inform examination development and assessment. Subject Matter Experts (“SMEs”) may be involved in ETP exam assessment work as individuals, in small teams, or as part of a working group.

PURPOSE

To set out the process by which, with the support of the EAC, the QAPP Committee, and the recommendation of the Board, the RC assesses and approves ETP exams required under the CSHBC Bylaws as conditions of registration.

SCOPE

This policy sets out the roles of the RC, the Board, the EAC, the QAPP Committee, and SMEs, with respect to assessing and approving the examination requirements for registration with CSHBC.

The examination requirements apply to all applicants for Full registration with CSHBC, except those applying under the provisions of Bylaw section 71 (*Transferring registrant (labour mobility within Canada)*), and those returning to Full registration after a period of holding non-practising registration.

POLICY

1. ROLES

1.1. Registration Committee

The RC is responsible for granting registration, including reinstatement of registration, to those who satisfy the conditions or requirements for registration (HPA s. 20(1) & (2)).

The HPA provides that a college may, in its bylaws, set out examinations that may be required, used or relied on by the RC in satisfying itself under section 20 that an applicant meets the conditions or requirements for registration (s.19(1)(m.3)).

In line with CSHBC Bylaws, all examinations required of applicants must be approved by the RC, and the passing of an ETP exam is required for registration in all 3 of the professions regulated by CSHBC (s.64(1), s.82(1)(b), and s.85(1)(b)).

1.2. Examination Advisory Committee

The EAC is an advisory committee, reporting to the RC, whose responsibilities under CSHBC Bylaw s.21.1 are to:

- a. develop, under the direction of the RC, the content of the examinations required under the CSHBC Bylaws that are administered by the College (i.e., the HID Practical Examination); and
- b. assess and make recommendations to the RC on the ETP exam requirements for applicant seeking Full registration with CSHBC.

1.3. Quality Assurance & Professional Practice Committee

While final decision-making authority in respect of ETP exam approval resides with the RC under the CSHBC Bylaws, it is recognized that required expertise may be available within the QAPP Committee.

At the request of either the RC or the Board, or both, the RC may consult QAPP Committee expertise in the examination approval process for reasons which may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Where specialist knowledge is required, which is unavailable within the RC or the EAC;
- b. Where examination content may impact or reference quality assurance programming and/or compliance with competency profiles and standards.
- c. Where examination reliability and validity may impact or reference quality assurance programming and/or compliance with competency profiles and standards, including standards in respect of required levels of evidence.

1.4. Subject Matter Experts

SMEs may be appointed at the request of either the RC, the EAC, or both. The RC and the EAC may consider using SMEs in the examination approval process for reasons which may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Specialist knowledge is required which is unavailable within the RC or the EAC; and/or
- b. The EAC is not fully constituted (e.g. it is temporarily lacking representation from one of the professions due to a committee vacancy).

1.5. Board of Directors

While final decision-making authority in respect of ETP exam approval resides with the RC under the CSHBC Bylaws, it is recognized that such decisions may carry inherent risks, both with respect to public safety and to the reputation of CSHBC. Further, such decisions may impact relationships with key CSHBC stakeholders. As such, where a significant change in examination requirements is being proposed, the RC must consider all Board recommendations before final approval by the RC.

2. PRINCIPLES FOR EXAMINATION APPROVAL

RC members should be mindful of the following principles when assessing and approving examinations required for registration under the CSHBC Bylaws:

- a. Examinations must assess applicants against ETP competency profiles which have been either approved or accepted in principle by the RC for the profession(s) regulated by CSHBC;
- b. Examinations, where possible, should be culturally relevant to the Canadian health care system. In cases where this is not possible, mitigations should be explored (for example, reduced weighting for questions relating to international health care contexts);
- c. Examinations are sufficiently accessible to applicants and operate with appropriate frequency;

- d. Examinations are legally defensible in terms of the way they are developed, maintained, and administered;
- e. The requirement for at least 1 ETP examination, as a condition of Full registration for each of the professions regulated by CSHBC, is currently codified in bylaw;

3. PROCESS

3.1. CSHBC Staff

CSHBC staff members may, on their own initiative or at the direction of the RC or Board, conduct preliminary research with respect to an ETP exam that may be appropriate to adopt for one or more of the professions regulated by CSHBC. Staff will respect the confidential and sensitive nature of making enquiries into different examination options. Staff will keep the RC, the EAC, and the Board informed as to its work in this area.

Information pertaining to a Proposed Exam will be collated ready for presentation to the EAC and the RC. This information should include, but may not be limited to:

- a. ETP exam blueprint(s);
- b. Sample ETP exams;
- c. ETP exam reliability and validity data and information;
- d. Handbooks/manuals for candidates;
- e. Handbooks/manuals for regulatory bodies;
- f. Case studies.

3.2. Examination Advisory Committee

The EAC will review information relating to the Proposed Exam as gathered by CSHBC staff. It will consider whether there is a need for additional information and/or to recruit SMEs to properly review the Proposed Exam. As required, it will direct CSHBC staff to obtain further information and/or recruit SMEs to conduct a fulsome review. Once obtained, the additional information and/or outcome of the SME review will be returned to the EAC for consideration.

The EAC will review the Proposed Exam based on the principles outlined at section 2 and will consider a motion to recommend the Proposed Exam for approval by the RC, or otherwise.

The RC must consider the recommendation(s) of the EAC.

3.3. Quality Assurance & Professional Practice Committee

Given examination content, reliability, and validity may impact or reference quality assurance programming and/or compliance with competency profiles and standards, including standards in respect of required levels of evidence, it is recommended that the EAC and/or the RC consult the QAPP Committee during the review period. The EAC may propose a timeline and identify specific questions or issues and/or assign various tasks and deliverables to the QAPP Committee. The scope of work for QAPP Committee will be defined by the relevant committee(s).

3.4. Subject Matter Experts

SMEs will be recruited by CSHBC staff or at the direction of the EAC and/or the RC. The scope of work for SMEs will be defined by the relevant committee(s). SMEs will be accountable to the committee or staff that directed their work.

3.5. Board of Directors

The RC must consider the recommendation(s) of the Board in relation to the Proposed Exam. If the RC's final decision does not align with the recommendation(s) of the Board, it will provide detailed reasons for its decision (see section 3.5 below).

3.6. Registration Committee

The RC will review all materials considered by the EAC and the QAPP Committee in relation to the Proposed Exam, as well as recommendation(s) and comments by the EAC, the QAPP Committee, and/or the Board. Where it determines that additional information is required to make a decision in respect of the Proposed Exam, the RC may direct CSHBC staff to obtain further information or recruit SMEs to conduct further reviews. Any additional information obtained will be shared with the EAC and the Board, and the EAC and the Board will be given opportunity to provide comments and recommendations.

Once the RC has determined that it has sufficient information with respect to the Proposed Exam, and after consideration of any Board, EAC, or QAPP Committee recommendations, the RC will conduct a review in line with the principles outlined in section 2 (above) and consider a motion to either approve or adopt the Proposed Exam. If the RC's final decision does not align with the recommendation(s) of the Board, it will provide detailed reasons for its decision (see section 3.4 above).

This applies in cases where the Proposed Exam is an iteration of an existing and previously approved exam, and no public protection and/or reputational risk has been identified as well as in cases where Proposed Exam is offered by an alternative provider or is an existing exam that has undergone substantial change, and in cases where public protection and/or reputational risk has been identified.

3.7. Length of Process

The length of an ETP exam assessment and approval process will vary case by case. However, all parties involved in the process will recognize the importance of CSHBC's statutory mandate, and compliance with the HPA and CSHBC Bylaws, and will prioritize examination assessment and approval work accordingly.

4. PUBLICATION & NOTIFICATION

Following the approval of an ETP exam, CSHBC staff will take the following actions:

- a. Update the CSHBC website;
- b. Advise all applicants known to be currently eligible to write an ETP exam under CSHBC Bylaw sections 82(1)(b) or s.85(1)(b); and

-
- c. Advise key stakeholders, which may include approved BC and Canadian education programs, other Canadian speech and hearing health regulators, and professional associations.

5. REVIEW OF APPROVED EXAMS

Once an ETP exam is approved by the RC, the EAC and RC must consider undertaking a full or partial review of the exam in question every 7 years, or whenever there has been a substantial change in the circumstances impacting an approved ETP exam. A substantial change may include:

- a. A change in ETP exam content;
- b. A change in the reputation and/or integrity of an ETP exam;
- c. A change in the approach of a national alliance towards an ETP exam;
- d. A change in a competency profile that has been created or accepted on principle by CSHBC;
- e. A change in accepted practices for assessing and approving ETP exams.

CSHBC RELATED DOCUMENTS

CSHBC Hearing Instrument Dispensing Competency Profile

HIP Intern Examination Requirements (POL-R-04)

Marketing (SOP-PROF-07)

Unique & Shared Scope of Practice (SOP-PROF-03)