

Table 1: Comparison of Certifications Relevant to Nursing Professional Development and Nurse Educator Roles*

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Credential	Certifying Body	Role	Typical Employer	Typical Practice Environment	Eligibility Requirements	Initial Certification Cost**	Format	Pass Rate <small>(2024 data unless otherwise noted)</small>	Renewal Period
NPD-BC™	American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC)	NPD practitioner <i>Title varies by organization</i>	Healthcare organizations, academic institutions, professional nursing organizations, healthcare education companies* <i>*Representative of more common employers, however, NPD practitioners work for/in a variety of organizations in their focus on the professional development of individuals in healthcare practice.</i>	Interprofessional practice environments where healthcare occurs, e.g., acute care, ambulatory care, long-term care, home health care settings. Interprofessional learning environments where individuals in healthcare practice learn, e.g. healthcare practice settings, traditional classrooms, e-learning environments, simulation centers. <small>(Harper & Maloney, 2022, p. 24-25)</small>	1. Bachelor's or higher degree in nursing. 2. Two years of full-time RN practice (or equivalent). 3. Minimum of 2,000 hours of clinical practice in NPD in the previous 3 years. 4. Thirty hours of NPD continuing education in the previous 3 years.	ANA members - \$295 Non-members - \$395	Multiple choice exam 150 questions total, 125 are scored Answer options per question: 4 Time: 3 hours	76% <small>(ANCC, 2025)</small>	5 years
NPDA-BC® <small>(Certification is not currently available and is under review by CCI)</small>	Competency and Credentialing Institute (CCI)	NPD specialist <i>Title varies by organization</i>	Healthcare organizations, academic institutions, professional nursing organizations, healthcare education companies* <i>*Representative of more common employers, however, NPD practitioners work for/in a variety of organizations in their focus on the professional development of individuals in healthcare practice.</i>	Interprofessional practice environments where healthcare occurs, e.g., acute care, ambulatory care, long-term care, home health care settings. Interprofessional learning environments where individuals in healthcare practice learn, e.g. healthcare practice settings, traditional classrooms, e-learning environments, simulation centers. <small>(Harper & Maloney, 2022, p. 24-25)</small>	1. Graduate degree in nursing, or baccalaureate degree in nursing and graduate degree in related field. 2. Hold an active NPD-BC credential. 3. Minimum of 4,000 hours of active practice at the NPD specialist level within the last 5 years.	Not currently available.	Portfolio-based peer review	Not available	Not currently available.
CCRN® PCCN® <small>(Knowledge Professional Eligibility Pathways)</small>	American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN)	Various roles in critical or progressive care	Acute care setting, e.g., hospital Academic institution (academic faculty focused/working in acute or critical care settings)	Acute care settings for critically ill (CCRN®) or acutely ill (PCCN®) individuals receiving care	1. Minimum of 1,040 RN or APRN practice hours in prior 2 years, with ≥260 of those hours accrued in the year prior to applying. 2. Eligible practice hours include those in which the nurse applies knowledge that influences patients, nurses and/or organizations to have a positive impact on the care delivered to acutely ill (PCCN®) or critically ill (CCRN®) patients and families.	AACN members - \$255 Non-members - \$370	Multiple choice exam 150 questions total, 125 are scored Time: 3 hours	PCCN-K: 74% CCRN-K: Adult-80.53% Neonatal: 50% Pediatric: 70% <small>(2022 data) (AACN, n.d.)</small>	3 years
CNE®	National League for Nursing (NLN)	Academic nurse educator <i>Title varies by organization</i>	Nursing education program in an academic institution	Technical schools, hospitals, two-year colleges, four-year colleges, universities	Option A: 1. Master's or doctoral degree in nursing with a major emphasis in nursing education or Master's or doctoral degree in nursing plus a post-master's certificate in nursing education or Master's or doctoral degree in nursing and nine or more credit hours of graduate-level education courses. Option B: 1. Master's or doctoral degree in nursing (with a major emphasis in a role other than nursing education). 2. Two years or more employed in a nursing program in an academic institution within the past 5 years.	NLN member - \$425 Non-Members - \$525	Multiple choice exam 150 questions total, 130 are scored Answer options per question: 3 Time: 3 hours	70% <small>(NLN, 2025)</small>	5 years
CNE®cl	National League for Nursing (NLN)	Academic clinical nurse educator <i>Title varies by organization</i>	Nursing education program in an academic institution	Settings where the clinical component of an academic nursing program takes place, e.g., simulation lab and/or clinical practice setting	Option A: 1. Graduate degree with a focus in nursing education. 2. Three years of professional nursing practice in any setting. Option B: 1. Baccalaureate degree in nursing or higher. 2. Three years of professional nursing practice. 3. Two years of academic teaching experience within the past 5 years, which may include simulation-based instruction.	NLN member - \$350 Non-Members - \$450	Multiple choice exam 150 questions total, 130 are scored Answer options per question: 3 Time: 3 hours	76% <small>(NLN, 2025)</small>	5 years
CNE®n	National League for Nursing (NLN)	Academic novice nurse educator <i>Title varies by organization</i>	Nursing education program in an academic institution	Technical schools, hospitals, two-year colleges, four-year colleges, universities	1. Graduate degree in nursing with a major emphasis in nursing education or Graduate degree in nursing plus a post-master's certificate in nursing education or Graduate degree in nursing and nine or more credit hours of graduate-level education courses or Post-baccalaureate certificate in nursing education. 2. Currently within the first three years of practice as an academic nurse educator	NLN member - \$200 Non-Members - \$250	Multiple choice exam 150 questions total, 130 are scored Answer options per question: 3 Time: 3 hours	82% <small>(NLN, 2025)</small>	Non-Renewable

* Those considering any certification should refer directly to the certifying body's website for the most up to date and accurate information. This table is for educational purposes and comparison of certifications only.

** Please note cost of exams are at the time of writing and are subject to change.