



Q&A – CCP Standard of Practice

Thank you for your feedback on ACSLPA's Continuing Competence Program (CCP) Standard of Practice. In reviewing the feedback, we noticed that regulated members had a number of further questions, comments, and concerns about the CCP. Below are the most common themes we noticed in the feedback, with answers from ACSLPA.

Why is ACSLPA changing its CCP?

ACSLPA commenced a review and revision of its continuing competence program in 2020. This was initiated by the evolving literature on continuing competence, which showed that there was less evidence to suggest that the College's previous CCP supported or enhanced regulated members' competence to practice.

The timely introduction of the Bill 46 Amendment to the *Health Professions Act* also prompted changes to the College's CCP, as this Bill requires the establishment of a CCP within the College's Standards of Practice which:

- Must provide for regulated members or categories of regulated members to **maintain competence** and to **enhance the provisions of professional services** by participating in a program for self-directed professional development, and
- May provide for practice visits, examining, interviewing or other **competence assessment of the regulated members** or categories of regulated members.

Having regulated members engage in continuing competence activities is one critical way in which ACSLPA fulfils its mandate to protect the public. Therefore, the College has worked to ensure that its CCP meets the legislative requirements of Bill 46 (i.e., the inclusion of practice assessments), in addition to being an evidence informed way of maintaining competence and enhancing service delivery.

How can we have risks to competence if we are competent to practice?

An underlying assumption of the College with regard to the CCP is that the majority of regulated members are competent to practice and take steps on their own to stay competent. ACSLPA also views competence to practice as a continuum and understands that there are a variety of external factors that can impact a regulated member's ability to provide quality services. Therefore, the risks in the Risks and Supports Profile encompass a number of internal and external risk factors which *may* impact the regulated member.

While the presence of a risk may impact the regulated member's place on the competence to practice continuum, the identification of a risk to competence does not mean that the regulated member is incompetent. The purpose of the Risks and Supports Profile is to promote regulated members' self-awareness of the risks to their competence, so that they can take steps and measures to mitigate the risks and the impacts they may have on the member's competence to practice.

Why is there no minimum number of continuing education hours required under the new CCP?

Participating in ongoing education and professional development is an important component to maintaining and enhancing competence to practice. The aim of the continuing education report is to promote a mindful and engaged perspective to continuing education. Rather than jumping through hoops to get a certain amount of continuing education hours (some of which may not be relevant to practice), the College's approach to continuing education is to evaluate the impact of any continuing education on regulated members' competence to practice. This is why, apart from not requiring a minimum number of hours to be reported for the practice year, we are also asking regulated members to reflect on at least two example activities, and how the activities have impacted their competence, i.e., their skills, knowledge, attitudes, and judgement with respect to their practice.

What will the audit process look like? How will ACSLPA ensure that it's fair and objective?

After regulated members complete their CCP submission and practice permit renewal, an audit of the CCP submissions begins. In addition to a random selection of regulated members registered on the general register, the following categories of members will be audited:

- All new registrants of ACSLPA who obtained their practice permit between renewal cycles.
- All regulated members who opted out of completing the peer dialogue reflection for the practice year.
- Any regulated members whose random selection for a completion audit reveals an incomplete submission.

Once a regulated member is audited, they will be exempt from audit for four years (unless they opt-out of the peer dialogue reflection or are flagged for an incomplete submission during the completion audit).

The audit will be completed by the SLP and Audiology Practice Advisor and members of ACSLPA's Competence Committee. All submissions will be blinded, and identifying information redacted, so that auditors will not be aware of the identities of the regulated members whose submissions they review. In addition, ACSLPA CCP auditors will all receive standardized training on completing audits, including on the use of the rubrics for evaluation of submissions. Once audited, regulated members will receive their rubric results, so that they can see how their submission was audited.

Is the CCP practice assessment going to be sensitive to the various practice areas and settings that regulated members work in?

The practice assessment (the interview, record review, and on-site visit) is intended to be sensitive to the various practice areas and settings where regulated members work. Interviewers and assessors will be recruited from ACSLPA membership, with the intention to have a 'bank' of interviewers and assessors who represent a variety of practice areas and settings.

If referred to the practice assessment stage of the CCP, regulated members will be 'matched' with an interviewer or assessor who has current or previous experience with the client age ranges and where possible, clinical areas and practice settings (e.g., school board, rehabilitation, private practice) that the regulated member works within.

***How will ACSLPA ensure fairness, transparency, and objectivity in the practice assessment process?
Who will be completing these assessments? How will they be trained?***

Building a CCP that is fair, transparent, and objective is a priority for the College. The following procedures will be in place to ensure this:

- Interviewers and assessors will be recruited from ACSLPA's membership, so that any regulated member referred to the practice assessment will be evaluated by another professional with the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and judgement to assess their performance, and to provide support as needed.
- Interviewers and assessors will undergo ongoing standardized training, include standardization of the assessment processes and the use of the evaluation rubrics.
- The practice assessment process will be overseen by ACSLPA's SLP and audiology practice advisors.
- Regulated members can expect transparency in all communications regarding their performance in the CCP practice assessment stages. Regulated members will be given access to all reports detailing their performance and results, so that they can see how they were evaluated.
- An appeals process will be built in to the CCP. Regulated members may lodge an appeal in writing with the Competence Committee after any decision at any stage in the practice assessment.

An appeal may be lodged if the regulated member, while participating in the CCP:

- Believes they have not been given due process, or
- Has reasonable and compelling grounds for an exemption of any part of practice assessment.

Regulated members are also advised that they can contact their practice advisor with questions, concerns, or comments at any time regarding their CCP submissions or participation in any of the practice assessment stages.

Are the CCP activities going to be very time-consuming to complete?

ACSLPA's intention is that the CCP activities will be less time and labour intensive as compared to the previous program. While there are now three activities that all need to be completed annually, these activities are completed via checkboxes and short-answer questions.

While there is a generous character allowance for completion of the narrative reflection questions, regulated members are advised that there is no minimum number of words required for their responses to be valid. *Feel free to use as many (up to the character limit) or as few words as required to respond to these questions.*

Regulated members may find the example responses and the scoring rubrics for each CCP activity (posted on ACSLPA's website) helpful in guiding their own responses.

The list of actions that can be taken for non-satisfactory completion of the CCP seems harsh. What is the probability that I will face punitive action after completing the CCP?

Stating the potential actions that can be taken in the event of noncompletion or non-satisfactory completion of the CCP is now a requirement of ACSLPA by the government. Although explicitly stating consequential actions that a regulated member may face for breach of a standard of practice is a new procedure for the College, our intention is to provide regulated members with the support that they need throughout their participation in the CCP so that they can avoid these punitive actions. The actions listed (i.e., the imposition of practice permit conditions, initiation of a complaint) are considered 'last resort' actions that will only be taken in instances where there are significant concerns about the regulated member's competence to practice, or when the regulated member refuses to participate in the CCP practice assessment.