



Hong Kong College of Cardiac Nursing

Examination Policy Handbook for HKCNN

Membership Examination and Fellow Exit
Assessment

Hong Kong College of Cardiac Nursing

Examination handbook for ordinary membership and fellow examinations

Definition of ordinary and fellow memberships

Ordinary and fellow memberships refer to the credentialing of an individual nurse's qualification and knowledge for advanced practice in cardiac- and cardiovascular-related nursing. The credentialing is based on predetermined standards validated by the Hong Kong Academy of Nursing (HKAN).

The development of the examination procedures, assessment criteria, and quality assurance of HKCCN for ordinary and fellow membership examinations is in line with the Guidelines for Program Planning and Examination of HKAN (version 22 December 2015).

Eligibility criteria for application to ordinary and fellow membership examinations

Ordinary membership examination

Candidates who are eligible to sit for the ordinary membership certification examination should satisfy the following requirements:

- Holder of a valid Registered Nurse (RN) registration in Hong Kong with a valid practicing certificate;
- RN who has worked in a cardiac-related specialty for an accumulated period of at least four years in the most recent six years;
- RN who has completed 500 hours of recognized theory input in the cardiac care nursing curriculum;
- RN who has completed a minimum of 500 hours of clinical practice in cardiac-related specialty nursing in an accredited training site(s) within a four-year period. The clinical experience can be under complete supervision (100%) or with some supervision (at most 50%) in work placement situations as follows:
 - 50%–100% supervised practice ^[Note1]
 - 0%–50% work placement experience ^[Note2]
- Holder of a master's degree in nursing or related practice from an accredited/recognized university by HKCCN;
- No criminal conviction or professional misconduct (self-declaration).

[Note 1] Definition of supervised practice

Refers to experience with an on-site designated appointed mentor who is a fellow of HKCCN and HKAN in current practice.

[Note 2] Definition of work placement experience

- The situation in which no on-site designated appointed mentor exists. However, the experience is recognized as a learning component, with explicit learning objectives and evidence on learning assessed by a recognized supervisor/mentor.
- The evidence of learning can be, but not limited to, case studies, reflective papers, and learning contracts.

Selection criteria for trainees in case of competition

- The mentor to trainee ratio is 1:2. If there are more than 2 trainees, the selection of trainees would follow the first come first served basis or at the mentor's discretion.

Fellow Exit Assessment

Candidates who possess ordinary membership must apply for fellow membership within three years upon gaining eligibility; otherwise, the eligibility would lapse. Candidates who are eligible to sit for the fellow exit examination should satisfy the following requirements:

- Holder of a valid RN license certified by the Nursing Council of Hong Kong;
- Ordinary member of HKCCN and HKAN;
- Worked in the cardiac nursing specialty for at least six years (accumulated) in the most recent nine years;
- With six years of cardiac nursing experience, in which the last three years must have been worked in the cardiac-related nursing specialty;
- Achieved 60 CNE points within a three-year CNE cycle; 45 CNE points should be related to cardiac nursing specialty;
- Demonstrate evidence of significant contributions to the specialty;
- No criminal conviction/professional misconduct (self-declaration);
- Recommended by two fellow members of HKCCN.

Ordinary membership certification examination and fellow exit assesement

Ordinary membership examination

- A candidate would sit for a three-hour written examination with 150 multiple-choice questions (MCQs). The MCQs consist of 40%–70% independent questions and 30%–60% scenario-based questions.
- MCQ examination areas are in alignment with the seven competence domains of the advanced development of cardiac nursing. The 150 MCQs cover all the competence domains listed in the framework.
- The taxonomy for examination questions is at three cognitive ability levels at the following ratios:

	Level of cognitive ability	Description	% of items
1.	Knowledge/ comprehension	Recognizing, listing, describing, and naming	20%–30%
2.	Application	Interpreting, comparing, integrating, prioritizing, implementing, and detecting	20%–30%
3.	Critical thinking	Evaluating, judging, synthesizing, monitoring, hypothesizing, and planning	40%– 50%

- Examination panel for membership certification examination
 - An examination panel is appointed by the HKCCN Council and reports to the Examination Committee.
 - The panel consists of three persons, namely, a chief examiner and two members, experienced in education and examinations.
 - The panel is responsible for the following:
 - setting examination questions,
 - validating and testing the questions,
 - finalizing the examination questions,
 - marking the examination papers, and
 - reporting the results and making recommendations to the Examination Committee.

Fellow exit assessment

- A candidate should submit a written report relevant to his/her cardiac sub-specialty (for example, but not limited to, case review, project report, or research) to the Education Committee of HKCCN four weeks prior to the fellow exit assessment.
- Fellow exit assessment components:
 1. Written report (25%) and oral presentation (15%)
 2. Clinical competency domains (35%)
 3. Service-related impact (25%)
- Fellow exit assessment format:

1. Written report and oral presentation (Total 40%)

Written report (25%)

- The candidate must be the first author of the written report (for example, but not limited to, case review, project report, or research).
- The written report should relate to the candidate's current cardiac sub-specialty area.
- Normally and unless specified, an original thesis written for a postgraduate degree is not considered.
- The written report is expected to reflect the candidate's advanced cardiac and cardiovascular-related nursing practice in her/his sub-specialty.
- A written report submitted after the application deadline will not be considered.
- The candidate's submitted written report will be initially screened by the examination panel for eligibility to proceed to oral presentation and viva examination.
- Guidelines for the written report
 1. Should be type-written on A4-size paper
 2. Should contain a cover page with the candidate's name, ordinary membership number, fellow mentor's name and job position, report title, and date of submission
 3. Should be within the word limit of 2000 words
 4. Submission should be in four sets of hard copy and one soft copy
 5. Should include a self-declaration of original work
 6. Should follow the recommended outline listed below
 - Background of the report
 - Significance of the project/study
 - Aims and objectives/hypothesis
 - Methodology (process of investigation or evaluation)
 - Findings/results
 - Discussion
 - Implications on cardiac nursing practice in local and/or international context

Oral presentation (15%)

- A 20-minute oral presentation of the written report will be scheduled.
- The candidate is expected to highlight the key components of the written report.

2. *Viva examination (total 60%)*

Clinical competency domain – 30 minutes (35%)

- Question-and-answer session for clinical issues relevant to the candidate's written report
- The candidate is expected to address most of the seven competency domains in the advanced cardiac nursing practice of the topic area to support and complement the care relevant to clinical outcomes, nurse-sensitive outcomes, and patient preference

Service-related impacts – 30 minutes (25%)

- Question-and-answer session for service-related impacts relevant to the candidate's written report
- The candidate is expected to apply and synthesize innovative advanced nursing practice to enhance professional and service development in his/her cardiac sub-specialty area

- Viva examination panel

- Composition of the viva panel (nominated by the college president)
 - Chairperson
 - Two internal examiners who are fellows of the specific cardiac sub-specialty (foci of assessment: clinical competence and practice orientation)
 - One HKCCN council member (foci of assessment: professional development and contribution to cardiac nursing)
 - One overseas external examiner (foci of assessment: clinical leadership, evidence-based practice and/or research)
- The viva panel members should meet the following:
 - fellow of the HKCCN cardiac sub-specialty
 - advanced practice nurse or above rank
 - possesses appropriate clinical expertise in a relevant cardiac sub-specialty field

Administration of ordinary membership examination and fellow exit assessment

- Tentative examination schedule
HKCCN implements the ordinary membership certification examination and fellow exit assessment once a year (in June and December, respectively). Announcement and call for application will be made on the website of HKCCN.
- Examination fee
An examination fee will be charged to cover the cost of processing the candidates' applications.
 - Ordinary membership certification examination: HKD 1,000
 - Fellow membership examination: HKD 1,000All examination payments must be accompanied by a completed application form, which can be obtained from the HKCCN website. Examination fees are subject to change without notice.
- Examination application process
 - Notification of the written examination six months prior to the examination
 - Registration at HKCCN three months prior to the examination
 - Vetting of the eligibility of applicants by the Examination Committee
 - Confirmation of candidates' eligibility to sit in the examination a month before the examination
 - Payment of examination fees (non-refundable and non-transferrable)
- Candidates who fail an examination in the first attempt are not allowed to retake the examination in the same year. They can re-take the examination in the following 4 years for maximum 2 attempts and once each year.
- Special circumstances
 - In the event of extreme weather on examination day, HKCCN will determine the need to cancel and reschedule the examination.
If Typhoon No. 8 or the Black Rainstorm signal is hoisted at or after the following times, the examination/assessment will be cancelled.
 - 0630: All examinations/assessments before 1400 will be cancelled.
 - 1000: All examinations/assessments between 1400 and 1800 will be cancelled.
 - 1400: All examinations/assessments in that evening will be cancelled.
 - The re-arrangement of examinations/assessments will be announced as soon as possible. Candidates are advised to check the latest announcement at the HKCCN website.
 - In the event that a candidate cannot sit for a scheduled examination due to sickness, a formal written notification should be submitted to HKCCN with supporting evidence within five working days from the date of the scheduled examination. Approval of absence is on individual basis and at the discretion of HKCCN. Absence without approval is considered a strict failure.

Process of setting examination questions and approval

The examination sub-committee of the education committee sets up an Assessment Review Panel (ARP).

- Panel members include a chairperson, a chief examiner, relevant members of EC, invited experts with relevant clinical and academic backgrounds, and an external examiner.
- The roles and responsibilities of ARP are as follows:
 1. Define the type, structure, and content of questions
 - Adopt an appropriate methodology
 - Serve the purpose of assessment
 - Design multiple-choice questions according to the guidelines for setting an examination
 2. Scrutinizing the answer outlines
 - Relevance of the answers and correctness of the questions
 - Fairness of the allocation of marks to the answers
 - Implication of controversial issues
 3. Allocation of time for answering the questions
 - Estimating the time for completion of different types of questions
 4. Testing of new questions
 - Answering the questions by panel members to test for validity and practicability
 - Assess the results for the reliability of responses
 5. Approval of questions

Arrangement for conducting the ordinary membership certification examination

- Prepare the setting and confirm the seating arrangement, which will be posted at the examination hall.
- The examination is administered by the Examination Panel and supervised by the Chief Examiner.
- Examination papers are distributed before the examination starting time and collected with a sealed cover after the examination.
- During examination, candidate identity is checked by the examination invigilators.

Results of ordinary membership certification and fellow exit assessment

Examination result endorsement

(1) Ordinary membership certification examination

- Ten percent of the highest and lowest marks on the examination questions will be randomly checked by the ARP.
- The examination committee will report the examination results and committee recommendations to Education Committees.
- A reviewer appointed by the Council will review the examination results and report his/her assessment to the Council.
- The recommendation of the reviewer and the decision made by the HKCCN Council will be final.
- The examination results will be endorsed by the HKCCN Council, and the candidates will be informed of the results four to six weeks after the examination.

(2) Fellow exit assessment

- The written reports will be assessed by the viva panel.
- The examination committee will report the examination results and committee recommendations to Accrediation Committees.
- A reviewer appointed by the Council will review the examination results and report his/her assessment to the Council.
- The recommendation of the reviewer and the decision made by the HKCCN Council will be final.
- The assessment results will be endorsed by the HKCCN Council and HKAN, and the candidates will be informed of the results four to six weeks after the examination.

Passing score and marking

(1) Ordinary membership certification examination

The passing score required to become an HKCCN ordinary member is 70% of all items in the set of MCQs. Marking is criterion-based.

(2) Fellow exit assessment

The passing score required to become an HKCCN fellow member is 60% of the overall assessment components. Marking is criterion-based.

Results notification

Candidates will receive their results four to six weeks after the examination. The official result will indicate a “pass” or “fail” grade. Examination results are released to individual candidates in written form only. Results are NOT reported over the telephone or via e-mail.

Examination misconduct

HKCCN is responsible for upholding the integrity of the reported scores. Should examination misconduct of a candidate occur, HKCCN will disqualify the candidate. HKCCN is committed to rectify such a situation as quickly as possible.

Honesty in Academic Work

Considering that one of the primary aims of specialty education and professional development is to develop the ability to think independently, candidates must never use the work or ideas of others as their own. Plagiarism is as serious an offence as cheating in tests or examinations; both are punishable under college regulations.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of using the work of others (in particular, the writing of others), including online resources, as one's own.

The most obvious and substantial type of plagiarism is copying entire articles, sections, paragraphs, or sentences from other publications without acknowledgement. This act is clearly unacceptable. Even the use of a few words or paraphrasing (without actually copying any words at all) may constitute plagiarism if the source is not acknowledged. Students occasionally commit unintentional plagiarism because they are unaware of the very stringent rules that apply. If a material is obtained from a source, proper quotation and acknowledgements should be in place.

Disciplinary Action

All cases of academic dishonesty shall be handled by the disciplinary committees concerned.

Appeal Procedure

- Examinees who wish to lodge an appeal regarding the assessment result should submit a formal appeal application letter to the Examination Committee within two weeks from the result release date. Late application will not be accepted. Examinees are required to pay a fee (HK\$100) when they submit a request for appeal.
- An independent panel will be assigned to review the examination paper and make recommendations to the Examination Committee. The HKCCN Council will endorse the final result, and the final decision will be released to the applicant within six weeks after receiving the appeal application.

