



Academic Requirement | Clinical Skills Test (CST)

Clinical Skills Test Standard

Purpose

It is the responsibility of the School of Nursing (SoN) faculty and teachers to educate and prepare nursing students to be successful in the completion of program requirements which includes application of knowledge, skills, and judgement to provide safe, competent, and ethical nursing care. In nursing lab courses, clinical skills tests (CSTs) will be used to assess whether students have developed a sufficient level of proficiency with nursing psychomotor skills.

Definitions

Clinical Skills Test (CST)	A practical examination used to test clinical skill performance and competence in the nursing skills lab.
Marking rubric	A guide or tool that lists specific criteria for grading student learning. In the nursing lab, a grading rubric is used to assess student performance on CSTs.
Deduction	A penalty (a full or partial reduction in marks on the CST marking rubric) based upon the severity of a breach.
Breach	The violation or omission of a principle (e.g. asepsis).
Minor breach	A violation or omission that carries a minimal risk of harm to a client.
Gross breach	A violation or omission that carries a significant risk of harm to a client.
Self-correction	A process that involves two steps. The student must complete both steps unprompted by the lab teacher or TA for the process to be considered a self-correction: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The student identifies and communicates the breach him/herself to the invigilator2. The student uses critical thinking to remediate or resolve the breach

Required Performance Standards

Students will be required to successfully pass a minimum of one, and a maximum of two CSTs in each nursing lab course.

The passing grade for all CSTs will be 80%.

Students must successfully pass all CSTs in a lab course to receive a satisfactory rating in that course.

In the event that a student is unsuccessful (achieves a score less than 80%) on the first attempt of a CST:

1. The student will meet with the lab teacher and a learning plan will be developed. The goal of the learning plan will be to assist the student in learning the requisite skill and support the student to pass the CST on the second attempt.

2. The student will be scheduled for a re-test of the CST after a minimum of seven days.
3. At the scheduled CST re-test, the invigilator will assess whether the student is able to meet the expected performance standard (as assessed on the marking rubric).

If a student is unsuccessful (achieves a score less than 80%) on the second attempt of a CST:

1. The student will receive an unsatisfactory rating in the lab course. This will result in the student receiving a failing grade in that nursing course, and the student will not be eligible to progress in the nursing program.
2. The student will be referred to the Associate Director of the nursing program to discuss next steps.

CST Process

The process for the CSTs will be as follows:

- At the start of each lab course, students will be advised of the number of CSTs in the course and which skill(s) will be tested. Additional information about marking rubrics, scheduling of CSTs, and resources to prepare for the CST will be provided prior to the CSTs. Students will also be advised about how they will receive their grade and feedback on the CST.
- Students will be advised of their CST appointment time. This appointment may fall during or outside of regular lab hours. When scheduled outside of regular lab times, the student and teacher will negotiate a time when the student is available.
- CSTs are individual (one-on-one) tests. A single student demonstrates the required skill to an invigilator.
- The invigilator will grade the student's performance according to a marking rubric. The marking rubric will specify the deductions that students will receive for a minor or gross breach. These deductions may be mitigated if a student recognizes a breach and self-corrects.
- After completing the CST, the student will be notified within one business day of his/her grade and of any feedback from the invigilator.

Student Preparation

Resources and strategies that students may use to prepare for a CST:

- Review related seminar and lab content
- Seek teacher feedback during the skills lab
- Request additional assistance from a TA or lab teacher to understand the principles of a skill
- Request assistance from a lab monitor to practice a mock CST. Students are responsible for arranging this.
- Collaborate with peers to test and evaluate each other
- Videotape yourself practicing a CST. Critiquing your own performance and seeking feedback from others will increase your chances of success
- Take advantage of Open Lab, to practice a clinical skill where equipment and support is readily available